COMMON HERBS FOR NATURAL HEALTH

Juliette de Bairacli Levy

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Common Herbs for Natural Health

Juliette de Bairacli Levy

Illustration by Heather Wood

Ash Tree Publishing
Woodstock, New York

LOWER MILLS

by the same author

The Complete Herbal Handbook for Farm and Stable
The Complete Herbal Handbook for the Dog and Cat
Traveler's Joy
Look! The Wild Swans
Nature's Children

to

Sir Albert Howard,
Lind Af Hageby, and Riah Kaspi
who helped forward my herbal work

All information in this book is based on the experiences of and lore collected by the author. It is shared with the understanding that you, the reader, will take complete responsibility for your own health. The results of any treatments mentioned in this book cannot be predicted — nor guaranteed. The author and publisher are not responsible for any adverse effects or consequences resulting from the use of any remedies, procedures or preparations included herein. The wise woman seeks help from many sources, including her inner guidance, trusted friends and trained healers, in addition to the words written here.

First published in the U.K. by Faber & Faber, London, 1974
Revised, expanded edition published by
Ash Tree Publishing, Woodstock, NY, U.S.A. 1997

© 1996 Juliette de Bairacli Levy
© 1997 Ash Tree Publishing, PO Box 64, Woodstock, NY 12498
phone/fax 914-246-8081

Book design by Martha McGehee Teck

LM BR

RS164
.B282
1997x

Publisher's Cataloging in Publication
(Prepared by Quality Books Inc.)

Bairacli-Levy, Juliette de.
Common herbs for natural health / Juliette de Bairacli Levy.
p. cm.
Includes index.
Preassigned LCCN: 96-84261
ISBN 0-9614620-9-4

1. Materia medica, Vegetable. 2. Medicinal plants. I. Title.

RS164.B29 1996 615'.321
QBI96-40488

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Foreword

Many years ago, when I was just beginning my work as an herbalist, I discovered in our small town library a grand old book called *Common Herbs for Natural Health*. Even then it had that well-loved look that books tend to acquire with age and use, and its pages were well dog-eared. Unsuspectingly, having no idea how that book would affect me, I checked it out of the library. Thus began, quite innocently, a lifetime love of herbs and an equal devotion to the author.

I can truthfully say that book changed my life — and many other people's as well. All of Juliette's books have a tendency to do that, but *Common Herbs for Natural Health*, a modern herbal classic, seems to penetrate people's hearts directly. Perhaps it is because she talks so personally of her own love affair with herbs, her use of herbs throughout her life, and the many adventures she encountered as an herbalist as she traveled Gypsy-like throughout the world. She evokes a sense of adventure and freedom that seems to evade many people these days, and reawakens our own personal dreams of a more natural way of living in harmony with the world.

Throughout this endearing book, Juliette shares many of her favorite recipes and herbs. But it is more than the written word that inspires the reader when reading the books of Juliette de Bairacli Levy. She possesses that rare ability to open people's hearts to the wonders of herbs and the earth, and to our responsibility as caretakers of the green world. And she is able, through her words, to impart the essence of what herbalism is. Many herbalists today acknowledge that their own work with herbs was deeply inspired by the teachings and writings of Juliette de Bairacli Levy. In fact, it may be that this small Gypsy woman had a more profound influence on American herbalism than any other individual in the last several decades.

I had the great privilege of escorting Juliette on her first visit to the United States after many years of absence. She had been living like a hermit on a small, remote island in Greece, a lifestyle that pleases her tremendously. Her frequent travels had taken her to many places in the Mediterranean, Europe, the Azores, and other spots on the globe that she could find that remained unspoiled. But she hadn't been back to the States since the writing of her book, *A Gypsy in New York,* in the early fifties. Her trip here entailed attending several conferences as a noted guest.

Everywhere we went I was amazed at the numbers of people who flocked to her, almost reverently, tenderly carrying long treasured copies of her books to be signed. Each person seemed to have a personal story of how her books and the recipes and remedies scattered throughout them had helped a pet, a child, a friend. *Common Herbs for Natural Health* was one of the books most often seen at these meetings. Copies of her books were always old and definitely well marked with telltale signs of use. Whole families would come, parents with their children and their children's children, all raised by the principles set forth in her books.

One incident in particular stands out. Juliette was doing a book signing at a small herb store in Montpelier, Vermont. People were lined up in the hallway and down the street waiting to talk to her. Though well into her eighth decade of life, she was pert and attentive throughout the entire evening, taking the time not only to sign each book lovingly, but to converse with each individual. Toward the end of the evening, an older women who had been waiting patiently for her turn approached Juliette. Behind her came her adult daughter and her son-in-law, trailed by a clan of radiantly healthy children. Here was an entire family of seven, from grandmother to daughter to son to grandchildren, passing the herbal tradition along as it has been passed for generations. And there sat Juliette, that grand old herbalist, reveling in the stories told of how the parents had used this and that remedy from her books over the years, and the remarkable results they'd experienced.

It reminded me of my own experience using Juliette's books as guides for my own family's health through the years. My primary references were *Common Herbs for Natural Health* and *Nature's Children.* Having been raised by the principles set forth in these books, my son, Jason, now a father himself, uses those same old beloved copies as guides for his own little boy's health. When Jason, as an adult, met Juliette for the first time, his greeting to her was, "Ah! At last I meet the woman I have heard about all my life and who helped raise me!"

Though there is a plethora of new and excellent herb books available, Juliette's book remains, unquestionably, one of the most important and one that should be included in the library of everyone who loves herbs. Readers will find invaluable information, herbal recipes and formulas, and health hints, but even more, they may find, as thousands of readers before them, their very souls being infused with the spirit and essence of herbs.

May all the beauty of nature surround you.

Rosemary Gladstar
Sage Mountain, Vermont
November 5, 1996

Introduction

Herbal medicine is man's rightful medicine: The powers of herbs cannot be denied. From the days of the early cavemen to the present time when human beings are soaring to the moon, people have used herbs to promote and safeguard health, and to heal disease. Herbs have also been used very successfully for healing the ills of those animals which man has domesticated.

Some of us have special skills with herbs, and we call ourselves herbalists. This skill is an inheritance and is also highly developed amongst the wandering people of the world, especially the Gypsies, Bedouin Arabs, and the American and Mexican Indians (nomadic people known to me, and there are many others in lands to which so far I have not traveled). I have sought herbal knowledge from those wandering tribes, living with them and loving them, and much that I have learnt can be found in this book, and in my earlier herbal for farm and stable animals.

This twentieth century has seen a universal revival of and interest in herbal medicine. For herbal remedies were fast fading from memory: Thirty years ago, when I began writing about herbs for veterinary use, I was quite alone; now thousands are at my side. Further, herbs are to an increasing extent coming back into human orthodox medicine. Many have always held their place there.

Mankind cannot forsake herbs. They are promised in the Bible to the human race, and that promise is well known, for it is proudly quoted in almost every herbal. In the Old and New Testaments there are over a dozen mentions of herbs or medicinal trees of value to mankind, for food or medicine. That our forefathers valued an herb garden is shown in Ahab's plea to Naboth (I Kings 21:2): "Give me thy vineyard that I may have it for a garden of

herbs, because it is near unto my house."

Man can never excel Nature in medicine manufacture, for she makes the best ones. There is an herb or several herbs to cure or relieve every ailment of man and animal, bird and insect; and herbs applied in agricultural practice will even cure crops of their diseases.

The human race should make a study of herbs and not be content to remain ignorant of a medicine which is man's rightful inheritance, and which has only become lost to men through their ignorance and laziness and their departure from natural living. People should not be content to pay high prices for chemical medicines, which are seldom beneficial to the human body because they are unnatural, and which are very often harmful, their total effects being unknown. Instead they should learn to know the wild medicinal plants — the herbs — which are free for the gathering. Teeming in the countryside, the world over, are medicinal herbs and edible plants; it shows disbelief in the power of God to pass them by.

My two children, now grown up, have never had other than herbal treatments in their lives, and have always taken an abundance of wild herbs and fruits in their daily diet. They are both Nature children, enjoying rugged health. When my son was a child, in Spain, his leg was cut almost to the bone by jagged blocks falling from a newly built wall. I healed this injury speedily, using only rosemary. Rosemary has remained my favorite herb ever since; I use it more than any other herb and cultivate it wherever I live. It was also a favorite of a queen of Hungary, and a lotion from it was known to the Gypsies as "The Queen of Hungary's Water." It was sold by Hungarian Gypsies on their far travels and won worldwide fame for its healing properties.

In Israel, where I have lived for many years, I have learnt to make much use of rue. Its medicinal properties have proved so excellent in my herbal work that I can understand why Mahomet chose this herb for his blessing and why Arabs everywhere plant it in their gardens to protect their homes against "the evil eye."

My present work is largely in agriculture, and the use of herbs has given me crops and trees of exceptional health and size, which have attracted the interest of the experts and brought me encouragement from those who believe in natural agriculture. Also by growing bee herbs I have kept my hives of bees entirely disease-free in a region where that lethal bee disease, foul brood, has been rife and very close to my hives.

My publishers have asked me to write this herbal for general human use, following my several herbals on veterinary medicine, and have left me entirely free to decide as to the kind of herbal to be written.

All the herbal treatments in this book are safe and well proven. The poisonous herbs (which also have their uses) I have not included in this book, as in most cases there are similar non-poisonous herbs which can be employed in their stead. The same applies to the recipes. I have only included simple ones with ingredients easy to obtain.

For those readers interested in a more detailed study of herbs and herbal treatments, and in the use of trees in medicine, I have my veterinary herbal for farm and stable, with over seventy pages of materia medica. All those veterinary treatments can be applied for human use, and have been so applied through many years. That book, *Herbal Handbook for Farm and Stable*, is published by Faber and Faber. It is in most libraries for those who want to see what it is about. I was happy and surprised to obtain a good review of it in such orthodox publications as *The Farmer's Weekly* and *The Field* (of England).

In this present book are included many new medicinal herbs and herbal treatments of my own discovery, and hitherto unpublished ones that I have collected on my travels. I hope that it may help newcomers to herbs to discover the wonder of herbal medicine. And I hope that for those who already possess herbal knowledge it may provide a little that is new, and help to strengthen their faith and pride in this great and ancient form of healing.

Chapter 1

Gathering, Preparing, and Preserving Herbs

The most healthful way to use herbs is to gather them fresh from the countryside, or fresh from the herb garden. However, as the majority of herbs are not evergreen, some drying and storing is necessary to keep supplies available for medicines throughout the year, especially in hot, dry climates where the green period of plant life is brief.

For gathering of herbs the following rules should be followed: A general law is that all plants should be gathered during the time when they are at the peak of their growth, usually during the spring and early summer months. The best gathering hours are in the early morning after evaporation of dew. Herbs gathered when dew-wet are not suitable for drying, as they will turn moldy. The same applies to rain-wet herbs. Also, when gathering for drying it is best to take the herbs at the time of the month when the moon is waning, in the early days of the waning. At such times there is less sap in the foliage and stems, and the herbs dry more easily.

The following rules are applicable to the different parts of plants required for medicinal use:

Leaves should be picked when young. Newly opened leaf buds possess concentrated medicinal powers. Yellowed, faded leaves, mottled or insect-bitten ones should not be used. Snip off all stalks.

Flowers should be gathered in their first opening and before being much visited by bees and other insects. Faded, wilting and insect-eaten flowers should not be picked. As with leaves, snip off stalks when required for drying.

Seeds should be left to sun-ripen as much as possible, ripening on the plant, but watch should be kept to ensure gathering before seed dispersal by wind or other means. Yellowing leaves are often an indication of ripened seeds.

Roots are best gathered for drying when the sap rises in the early spring, although they may also be taken after the plant sheds its leaves in the autumn or winter. Gather when the moon is waxing full; the roots are more tender then.

Barks, as with roots, should be gathered in the early spring or autumn. So as not to damage the shrubs or trees, bark should be taken from the big branches only, which can be sawn off the shrub or tree before the outer bark (and sometimes the inner layers) are collected from them.

Note. It is necessary to give a warning nowadays concerning chemical poison sprays used on weeds and other herbs. When gathering herbs, care should be taken that they have not been sprayed. Now that poison spraying is often operated from the air, the danger to medicinal herbs is considerable.

Preservation of Herbs

There are a few simple rules to follow in order to preserve herbs so that they will keep in good condition from season to season. Herbs well preserved can be used up to two years after collecting, when they should be replaced by fresh supplies. Do not merely throw out the old herbs as rubbish; sprinkle them around the most valued garden plants as a tonic, for they will do much further good when used in that way (see Chapter 4).

The main rule in preserving herbs is to use only good quality material. Therefore all blighted, faded, insect-eaten herbs should be avoided when gathering. The next rule is to make sure of predryness. Herbs to be preserved should not be damp from rain, dew, frost or snow. Also garden herbs being gathered for pressing should not have been watered since the previous day.

Leaves and Flowers dry well in thin brown-paper bags, necks left open, pegged on rope lines. That way they can have contact with moderate sunlight. Or they can be hung in medium-size

bunches, about four large handfuls of herb to a bunch. The bunches are suspended in a cool, dry shed or beneath trees, where there is a good flow of air, or spread on tables or shelves and turned frequently. Drying flat between sheets of soft white paper (such as shelving paper), but without pressing, is another method. Herbs can also be dried by layering on fine-mesh wire netting or on closely-laid canes, placed on floor or dry ground, and covered with cotton gauze held in place with dust-free stones.

In cold climates, the weak sunlight of early morning and late afternoon can be used directly on the herbs to speed their drying. Hot sunlight causes fading and loss of medicinal properties, so herbs should be protected against this. When herbs are sun-dried on the plant itself their medicinal properties are diminished but not greatly harmed; this is the easiest way. Many peasants and Gypsies leave herbs to dry on the plant, and cut their herbs direct from the rooted thing, wind- and sun-dried.

Sap of shrubs and cacti, and plant resins and juices, especially that of the opium poppy, are taken direct from the herb, to be used fresh, and then made into concoctions such as opium cake.

In cold climates, heat from fire may be necessary to dry plants fully. Only very slow, gentle heat should be used, for quick drying is destructive to the health of all herbs. Just as seeds must be left to ripen naturally and slowly if they are to retain life and be able to germinate when sown, so likewise the life forces of herbs must not be damaged by strong heat.

Seeds or Fruits should be treated as leaves and flowers. When possible dry without removing from the plant, taking care not to lose the seeds by over-early wind dispersal.

The larger fruit can be sun-dried as advised for leaves and flowers in cool climates. In sunless climates they can be sliced, stones removed, and the remainder dried slowly in an oven, using only gentle heat and keeping the door slightly open. Fruits should be turned frequently. When fully dried they should be stored under airtight conditions. Strong canvas bags are best, with the necks tightly tied, and placed in a damp-free area. Dried lavender layered between dried fruits is a preservative.

Roots and Barks. All dirt and dust must be removed before careful drying; some artificial heat will be necessary in cold climates. Turn frequently during drying.

Storage. Herbs can be successfully dried, but then spoilt by careless storage. When herbs are fully dry, they can be stored in brown paper bags, the necks tied with raffia. Or the herbs can be broken into pieces and stored in jars or tins.

The finest containers for medicinal herbs are those old-fashioned jars of darkened glass with tight-fitting glass stoppers. For such storage the herbs are broken small and not packed too tightly.

As I think I have told readers, I am a traveler and cannot take heavy jars along with me. I use strong brown-paper bags tightly tied and find such storage satisfactory. For extra protection I put the paper bags in strong cotton sugar sacks, washed free of all sugar. When the cotton sacks are tightly packed with the paper bags of herbs, the necks are then well tied with fine twisted wire. The sacks then have to be hung from wires arranged in such a way that rodents cannot climb down or drop down onto them. For rodents know well the value of medicinal herbs, seeds, and roots, and will eat them and spoil them by contamination.

Care should be taken against spoiling by insects such as beetles, moths, ants and mites of various kinds, which also seek out stored medicinal herbs, since some of the beneficial properties are available to them. In fact, storage is the most difficult part of preserving medicinal herbs, and care must be given to the herbs at all times. In hot climates vermin are especially troublesome. In cold climates there is the danger of mildew.

Quick Freezing Method for Culinary Herbs: First blanch in boiling water for one minute, then plunge immediately into iced water. Drain through a colander, and then seal quickly in aluminum foil, and put in freezer; keep there until required. This method is good for preserving culinary herbs for flavoring of food. It destroys the medicinal powers, and therefore is limited in its use. Also, aluminum does not improve the health of herbs, nor of foods kept within it.

Neither plastic nor nylon should be used for storage of fresh herbs, nor for longtime storage of dried herbs. These are not healthful and spoil the vitality of herbs.

Preparation of Herbs

The making of medicines from herbs is a simple process, especially when it is the leaves, flowers or seeds which are used. Of course many of the medicinal leaves, flowers and seeds can be eaten raw by man, and that is the best way to utilize them. But since many medicinal herbs are unpleasant in taste and extremely bitter, it is usual to take them in the form of a medicinal tea or brew. Dried herbs have twice the strength of fresh, therefore when using fresh, larger amounts should be taken.

General Method for Making Brews and Standard Brews: Leaves and flowers should be snipped off the stalk, and big leaves should be cut into smaller pieces with scissors. This cutting always helps release of juices.

The herbs, freshly gathered or dried, should be placed in an enamel, steel or earthenware pan and the required amount of cold water added. Then heat over a gentle flame until boiling point is almost reached. Keep on the heat for approximately three minutes but do not boil, remove from the heat, and allow the herb to steep (brew) for at least three hours before use. Overnight steeping is best.

Do not strain the herbs; leave them in the pan, or pour the unstrained liquid into a glass jar or a pot. The longer the herb brews, the better it becomes.

Straining is not necessary, as the herbs settle to the bottom of the vessel and the clear liquid can then be drawn off as required.

Throughout the heating time, keep the pot covered in order to prevent escape of vital properties in the steam. Also keep covered during the steeping period and throughout use. The pan lid can be used, slightly raised to admit a little air (otherwise speedy fermentation will ensue). When the brew is stored in jars or pots, a cotton cloth should be tied over the herbal liquid, to admit air but exclude dust and vermin.

Keeping time for brewed herbs is usually three days, less in hot climates. In hot climates always put the herbal liquids to stand out of doors in the cooler night air to reduce fermentation. Fermentation does not matter when the herb is required for external use. (Fine bubbles seen in the brew after it has stood cold for several days indicate fermentation.)

Standard Brew. There will be frequent references to this, in the next chapter particularly. General quantities are one large handful of dried herbs to two cups of water, prepared as instructed above. For more exact measurements of some individual herbs, the following chapter, Materia Medica, should be studied.

Seeds, Roots, and Barks.

Seeds. When not eaten raw, they can be placed on flannel, watered, and put in a warm place until germination, which is indicated by cracking of the skin; sprouting white points of root and shoot indicate that they are ready for use. Or some seeds can be made into a brew, as already described. Some seeds can be lightly roasted and finely ground to make them more palatable.

Roots. Careful washing to remove all dirt is the first essential. Some roots can be eaten raw, after fine grating. Others, also after some cutting, should be brewed as with leaves and flowers, only in the case of roots there should be some boiling, until quite soft; this can take from a quarter of an hour to one hour, depending on the plant from which the roots are taken. As with leaves and flowers, keep covered throughout, and then allow to brew in a similar way. Roots usually (except the Solanaceae family) resist fermentation longer than leaves and flowers, and therefore can be kept longer when brewed.

Barks. A few may be eaten raw, but in general they need to be made into a brew, using boiling heat as for roots. When the inner bark layers are required for use, they call for individual preparation, described in Chapter 2.

Cold Herbal Brews. As I have said, many leaves, fruits, seeds and some roots of herbs can be eaten raw. I have evolved a simple method of using many of the unpalatable ones without cooking, for I believe in keeping as close as possible to nature. The wild ani-

mals, birds and insects make much use of medicinal herbs, and do not use fire to prepare them. It is possible for man also to use bitter herbs without heating in water. Milk is the medium used. Raw milk has great powers of absorption and is itself, when from herbivorous animals, merely vegetable matter in suspension.

Nothing more is necessary than to chop the herbs finely, place them in cold milk, and let them stand for four or more hours. Unpasteurized milk is best. Remove top cream, then add herbs. Use one heaped tablespoon of herbs to every cup of milk. Keep covered with a muslin or other porous cloth. Pound and press the herbs into the milk before use, then strain and drink.

Some herbs, especially the aromatic ones, such as sage, basil, thyme, chervil, also gorse blossoms and rose petals, can be sun-infused, that is to say, left for two days exposed to hot sunlight shining down into shallow dishes of water; glass dishes are best.

Tincture of Herbs can be made from many herbs with the addition of alcohol or vinegar. A general mixture is two ounces of the powdered herb to one quart of the spirit or liquid used. Make in a glass jar or jars with tight-fitting lids as used for bottling fruit. Lids must be fully airtight. When possible prepare in full sunlight, otherwise choose warm place. Shake the bottle many times daily. Making herbal tinctures takes about two weeks. When ready, store in a dark place.

Essence of Herbs are made by dissolving one or two ounces of the essential oil extracted from the herb in one quart of alcohol or vinegar. Store in a dark place. Essences are for external use. Flower and leaf essences can also be made by filling half a glass bottle with finely crunched herbs and topping up with cheap quality cologne. To every half pint cologne, add two teaspoons vinegar, one teaspoon castor oil. Infuse in a warm place, shake well night and morning.

Essential Oils of Herbs. The well-known oils, such as oil of eucalyptus, camphor, lavender, can be easily obtained. The more unusual oils such as rosemary, thyme, rue, wormwood, and such can be obtained by mail from special firms. (See Resources, page

11.) For years now I have made my own oils, and these have proved quite satisfactory.

Aromatic herbs such as those listed above, from rosemary to wormwood — and I also make oil of lavender and roses and balm — are finely crushed. A common mincing machine can be used, but I prefer the old traditional way of pounding the herbs to a fine pulp using two stones, one hollow, the other pointed. I place the herbs in the hollow stone and pound them with the pointed stone. A coffee grinder can be used, but that is usually of metal, and I prefer stone, which should not be too porous.

Two tablespoons of the pounded herb are then placed into a half-pint bottle, and the bottle is filled three-quarters full with a fine oil, such as corn or sunflower oil, and a tablespoonful of pure vinegar. The bottle is corked and placed in hot sunlight. The contents are shaken daily. At midday I change the position of the bottles so that they are always in the sunlight. After approximately three weeks, the oils are ready for use.

To make strong oil, the clear oil should be strained off every five days for three weeks. The herbal residue is then shaken from the bottle and all oil pressed from it, then newly pounded herbs should be added to the strained oil.

In lands where there is no strong sunlight, artificial heat must be used. The tightly corked bottles, which must not be more than three-quarters full, are placed in a double pan of water and heated gently for several hours, always keeping the water below the boiling point. The heating must be repeated daily for a week or so, until the required strength of oil is obtained: The oil should be strong enough to hold perceptibly the scent of the plant used when applied, as a test, on the skin of your arm.

Herbal Poultices are one of the most important ways of applying herbs to the body. They have been used since ancient times and are still an unsurpassed method of drawing out toxins from the skin and other organs of the body, for reducing inflammation, for curing sores, and for dissolving small cysts and tumors.

Note: *Precautions should always be taken against the poultices being applied too hot.*

Linseed Poultice: This is one of the best known, and it deserves its popularity. In the class of "common" poultice, it is for general use. A linseed poultice is made as follows: Warm a basin by rinsing it out gently with water just off the boil. Then pour into the warmed bowl a pint of boiling water. Using the left hand, sprinkle into the boiling water a quarter pound of linseed. Meanwhile, with a strong wooden spoon stir the mixture well until a smooth dough is produced, stirring quickly to prevent lumpiness. When the dough is made, stir into it half an ounce of olive oil (for treatment of tumors, use castor oil). Then spread thickly on a piece of warmed linen, using speed so as to retain the heat of the mixture. Then the ends are folded over and the poultice applied where needed. Or the linseed meal can be used hot, pressed into tightly sewn cotton bags.

For a "drawing" poultice, raw, grated, or boiled mashed carrots, or turnips, can be added to the linseed mixture. Do not press either the carrots or turnips; retain all their juice, and mix speedily into the linseed to give a thin mash, which is then applied directly where needed, or used within cotton bags.

Charcoal Poultice (used as a "cleansing" poultice): Raw grated, or boiled mashed carrots or turnips, are made into a paste with vegetable charcoal, the charcoal to be in fine powder form. Use enough carrots or turnips to form a paste, and apply direct to the skin where required.

Garlic or Onion Poultice: Grate finely, or boil, a quarter pound of garlic or a half pound of onions, and add to this the crumbs of a pound wheaten loaf, soaked in whey or cold milk. Apply directly to the body area.

Poppy Head Poultice: Used as a "soothing" poultice. Boil a handful of fresh or dried poppy heads (any species of poppy) in water, strain, add the above described linseed meal to this to stiffen it, and spread directly on the skin where required. As well as soothing, this natural opium poultice draws out toxic matter from infected wounds.

Herbal Poultice Bandages. Sprinkle powdered slippery elm bark into a small bowlful of boiling brew until a thin paste is

made. The brew is made from the chosen herb for the illness under treatment. The herb, finely cut, should be left in the water and worked into the paste. This is all then spread, warm, onto a linen bandage, for applying directly onto the wound, gathering, or whatever is being treated. Or a green pulp of the chòsen herbs in their raw state can be worked into slightly liquefied slippery elm powder, pounding all into a smooth paste to be applied cold to the linen bandage, and then used as described above.

The herbs adder's tongue, chickweed, gypsywort, St. John's wort, violet and wood betony are especially good for making the herbal poultice bandages.

A Standard Herbal Fomentation. Mix together two handfuls each of fresh wormwood, rue, chamomile, and half a handful of bay leaves — rather less of dried herbs. Boil well in a quart of water. Allow to steep overnight. Apply hot by dipping flannel into the reheated solution and bind firmly over the areas to be treated. It is a proven remedy for painful and hard abscesses, boils, gatherings, sores, and aching areas of the body.

Herbal Pills can easily be made for immediate use. Pound fresh herbs into a pulp, binding them into a firm paste with molasses or thick honey, and fine corn flour. Roll into small balls and place each inside a piece of clean white tissue paper or a thin piece of cotton wool, lightly dampened with cold water. The outer covering is swallowed along with the contents — paper is only wood pulp, a favorite diet of goats! Cotton wool is also plant matter, from the flower of the cotton plant.

Prepared Herbs. Those who have no land on which to grow herbs, and are far from countryside where herbs can be gathered wild, can obtain them in dried form from health shops. Not all the herbs I discuss will be available, but shops will often now stock a range of herbs.

Resources

These firms are known to me as suppliers of high quality dried herbs. I have also included suppliers of herbal tinctures, cosmetics, and other useful products.

Green Terrestrial
Box 266
Milton, NY 12547
914-795-5238

Blessed Herbs
109 Barre Plains Rd.
Oakham, MA 01068
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Glossary of Unfamiliar Terms

aperient - mild laxative.
apoplexy - stroke that results in paralysis.
biliousness - gall bladder problem; indigestion.
catarrh - inflammation and draining of mucous membranes.
chilblains - redness and swelling from exposure to extreme cold.
chorea - nervous disorder characterized by spasmodic twitchings.
dropsy - an abnormal amount of clear, watery fluid in a body tissue or cavity.
emollient - substance that softens, especially the skin.
febrifuge - reduces fever.
gathering - adhesion (internally) or keloid (externally) scar.
goiter - overgrown thyroid gland.
haulm - stalks of a plant.
hydrophobia - rabies; literally "fear of water."
leucorrhea - white discharge (usually from the vagina).
metritis - swelling of the uterine walls; endometriosis.
neuralgia - pain in the nerves; usually of a specific area.
phithisis - consumption, tuberculosis.
piles - hemorrhoids.
pleurisy - swelling of the lining of the lungs.
purge - catharsis, a cleaning out, vigorous emptying of the bowels, vomiting, emotional discharge.
scabies - contagious disease caused by a microscopic mite which burrows under the skin and causes intense itching.
vermifuge - agent that flushes parasitic worms from the body.
vulnerary - used for or useful in healing wounds.
whitlow - swelling of the end of a finger or toe that has pus. (If open, such a sore is called a *felon*.)

Chapter 2

Herbal Materia Medica

This chapter gives medicinal and culinary herbs in alphabetical order. Over two hundred herbs are included, with their uses and dosages. Many of the herbs are not to be found in any known herbal, and several are of the author's own discovery. Habitat is briefly described, and a description of the herb is given, with its use to man, and the dosage in which it should be taken.

With every herb is given the official Latin name as well as its common one. As the Latin names are international, a book on wildflowers in any language, *with illustrations*, will enable readers to identify the herbs not already known to them.

Although this book was originally published in Great Britain, I have not confined myself to European herbs. The herbs I describe are from the many countries which I have visited in my travels throughout the world. Most of these herbs, with the exception of the cacti perhaps, can be obtained almost everywhere.

The standard description of "herb" is: a flowering plant which does not develop persistent woody tissue (as a tree does), but is more or less soft and is used either for medicine, scent or flavor.

This is a very broad description, but herbs can be food also. The cereals, for instance, are herbs; they nourish those who partake of them, and possess many healing properties. Nevertheless, it will be seen that there is some degree of emphasis on perennial flowering plants.

In order to keep this book within reasonable proportions for household use, which is my purpose for this herbal, I have excluded trees, with the exception of a few which are more shrubs than trees and which are so exceedingly valuable as healers of

common ills that I was unwilling to leave them out. At some future date I hope to write a book on medicinal trees, for their healing powers are many and wonderful.

The herbs in this book can be used in the way the reader chooses, for instance: taken raw, infused in milk by the cold method, made into a Standard Brew, or made into pills, as fully described in the previous chapter.

I have used primitive measures for the herbs in this chapter: handfuls, cupfuls, spoonfuls, and so on. Only in my chapter of recipes have I given mostly scale weight measures, for in the recipes one needs to be more exact, whereas with the crude herbs, precise amounts either in the making or in the taking as medicine are not essential. With chemical medicines overdosage may be dangerous, whereas with herbs a little above or below the general dose does not matter at all. Herbalists do not travel around with weighing scales. The primitive measures are general, and everyone will use their own judgement.

The dosage for infants needs to be adjusted from the adult dose. Infants require a little less than half the adult dose, but again, precise quantities are not of importance.

Adder's tongue

Ophioglossum vulgatum. Ophioglossaceae

Found in uncultivated fields and waste-places. A fern plant, but possessing dark, smooth, oval leaves, and a distinctive flowering part forming a thin, hard spike which resembles the tongue of the adder. It is grouped with Moonwort in some classifications, and some exclude it from the ferns.

❀ Use, external: A famed wound herb. Apply to all wounds, sores, bruises, ulcers and chilblains.

▣ Dose: A handful of the leaf and spike are heated gently in olive oil, two average-size cupfuls of oil to one handful of herb, heated below boiling point for half an hour. Or the raw herb can be pounded into common cold cream, one tablespoon of herb to four ounces of cold cream.

The best way of applying is to spread the adder's tongue ointment thickly on clean adder's tongue leaves and bind into place, using cotton bandages.

Agrimony

Agrimonia eupatoria. Rosaceae

Found in hedgerows, uncultivated fields and heathland. Thornless leaves of rose form, also rose-form flowers, yellow, growing in spikes and having a distinctive apricot scent.

☸ Use, internal: Its chief use is as a remedy for jaundice, from which the plant takes its Latin name. It is also a cough and asthma remedy. Being astringent, it is useful in dropsy.

❀ Use, external: A weak brew is a remedy for earache and will dissolve hard wax when dropped warm into the ears.

▣ Dose: A handful of the herb brewed in three cups of water or buttermilk. Reduce by slow heating to two cups. Or take raw in pill form: two teaspoons of the pulped raw herb made into pills, taken morning and night, about six pills per dose.

Alder

Alnus glutinosa. Betulaceae

Alders indicate the presence of water. They grow as small, thick-trunked trees or shrubs in damp places, mainly in marshes and along riversides, bearing shiny oval leaves and flowers of green catkin form (male ones pendulous, female erect).

☸ Use, internal and ❀ external: Both leaves and bark are used. Being astringent, cooling and soothing, alder is much employed to reduce swellings, alleviate dropsy, and as an old aid in cases of gangrene. Alder makes a good poultice, and is effective in relieving swollen and inflamed breasts. To use: Pulp up a handful of leaves, moisten with warm milk, and bind over the place needing treatment.

American Indians used fresh alder leaves inside their moccasins to keep their feet cool and to enable them to travel long

distances. Country people place the leaves inside their boots to soothe aching and burning feet.

▣ Dose: One teaspoonful of the powdered bark brewed in one cupful of water by my Standard Brew method, or as pills; one or two teaspoons of the leaves, taken morning and night, as a remedy against diarrhea, dropsy and general weakness.

Alfalfa

Medicago sativa. Leguminosae

In England usually called lucerne. Found in pastureland, wild and cultivated. Alfalfa is a perennial plant, with grey-green leaves, and small purple, sometimes whitish, pea-shaped flowers. This is a very popular fodder herb and is equally good for human use.

❁ Use, internal: Rich in vitamins and minerals, alfalfa is a fine tonic, kidney cleanser and alkalinizer of the whole system. Known for the speed that it gives to race horses, it is likewise effective for all athletes.

▣ Dose: Take as a salad herb, cut small, a small handful twice daily. Or make into tea, the fresh herb or dried. A popular American drink is alfalfa tea flavored with orange peel, lemon peel, mint and honey, and drunk very cold.

Aloes

Aloe barbadensis or *A. vera.* Aloaceae

Found wild in dry, sandy and rocky regions, aloes are also much cultivated. The leaves grow in wands and are tall, fleshy and spike-toothed to protect them from grazing animals. The Indians call them "wands of heaven" because of their wonderful medicinal powers. Legend says that it is the only plant which came direct from the Garden of Eden. The juice is pressed from the leaves, sun-dried, and exported all over the world as a powerful laxative and blood-cleanser.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of constipation, intestinal worms, indigestion, lack of appetite.

❀ Use, external: To cure wounds, sores, ulcers in the mouth and to allay heat rash or poison ivy rash. Apply the fresh, cool, gummy juice direct from the fresh leaves, first shaving off the spiked borders and then cutting the leaves crosswise to release the juice. A famed mastitis cure.

▣ Dose: It is the powdered juice which is most used in medicine. Two to four grains (about one pinch), taken in a half cupful of warm milk, sweetened with molasses or honey.

Angelica

Archangelica officinalis. Umbelliferae

Found in damp and woodland places, and cultivated in gardens. Angelica is a rather hairy plant with ferny leaves, and umbels of white flowers of most powerful and fragrant scent.

❀ Use, internal: For all digestive troubles, including colic and heartburn, the leaves, broad leaf stalks and roots are used, as are the seeds. It is a good cordial drink with honey. Candied angelica stalks are a popular sweetmeat in France and Spain, and the candy is valued for its tonic properties and for fertility. The tea is a good eye tonic, strained carefully before use.

▣ Dose: The seeds are used as a mild tea, one teaspoonful of seed to one and a half cups of water, to bring up wind in infants and to soothe disordered stomachs. The roots, more powerful, can be used in a Standard Brew. It is important not to confuse this plant with hemlock, of the same family, which has a poisonous principle, conine.

Anise

Pimpinella anisum. Umbelliferae

Found in hedgerows and fields, and on rocky hillsides. Distinguished by its feathery leaves of brilliant green, and umbels of creamy flowers forming yellow seeds. The whole plant is highly aromatic and pleasant smelling. The anise of gardens flowers in July and, in a good season, seeds are ripe in late August. Star

anise (*Illicium verum*), a tropical, Asiatic plant related to the magnolia, is not the true aniseed.

❁ Use, internal: Similar to angelica, only anise is more powerfully tonic. Anise seeds and the extracted anise oil are used to flavor cakes and rye bread, and as medicine.

▣ Dose: In digestive ailments, chew one teaspoon of the seed before meals, three times daily. For babies, make a mild tea, using one teaspoon of seed to one cup of water, and give several teaspoons of the tea before meals. If bottle-fed, then add to the milk. For bread and cakes, a heaped teaspoon of anise seed to every pound of flour.

Asparagus

Asparagus officinalis. Asparagaceae

Found on river banks and in woodlands, the fleshy, scaly, sweet-tasting shoots of asparagus are well known and often cultivated. From the shoots develop the delicate but quite spiky asparagus ferns. In the Middle East, asparagus can be gathered wild in considerable quantities after the first rains. In Galilee I contest with the wild animals to gather the healthful, delicious shoots of wild asparagus before they eat them all up. The shoots contain a unique crystalline principle called asparagine.

❁ Use, internal: A proven remedy for all derangements and obstructions of the kidneys and bladder. There is no known herb which acts more powerfully on the urinary system, nor any herb more beneficial for this purpose. It also acts favorably upon the lymphatic system. A remedy for dropsy, jaundice, gall troubles. It is also aperient.

▣ Dose: A handful of the shoots eaten before meals. For medicinal purposes, eat the shoots raw. When not available, the canned shoots also possess some medicinal properties, or a Standard Brew can be made from the fern. Take a cupful, sweetened with honey, morning and night.

Plate 1. 1. Adder's Tongue 2. Agrimony 3. Angelica
4. Balm 5. Basil 6. Bindweed

Balm

Melissa officinalis. Labiatae

Found in woodlands, lemon balm has rather rough foliage of a dark shade and is very fragrant. Its flowers are hooded and small, white shading to yellow. Beloved by bees from which its name melissa is derived. This was the favored herb of the great medieval herbalist Paracelsus, who sold the remedy to kings as an elixir of life. The plant is said to safeguard against early senility and impotency. It possesses tannin and a pungent oil, from which the Arabs, who love this plant, make a perfume. It is a well-known monastery herb, and monks and nuns prepare from it a fragrant cologne and healing salves.

❁ Use, internal: As a fever remedy, to promote sweating. As a dysentery remedy and to soothe griping pains in the bowels. Against infertility and painful or delayed menstruation. To bring down retained afterbirth. For all uterine disorders. Treatment of nervous disorders including nightmares and disordered mind. Drunk as a tea when a person has been bitten by a venomous insect or a dog or any other animal.

Placed amongst linen, lemon balm deters moths.

▣ Dose: A tablespoon of the chopped leaves can be eaten raw twice daily. It is a palatable herb, I include it in our daily salads and in teas. Also, infused in white wine, with honey and raisins added.

Barley

Hordeum pratense. Poaceae

Found in moist meadows, also in cultivation as a field crop. Leaves are typical grass form, rather broad. The spikes have long awns on the glumes, which give barley its characteristic bearded appearance. Barley is of pale flaxen color when ripe, and the whole crop in cultivation has a shimmering light upon it and makes a typical rustling sound when windblown, owing to the long awns brushing against other spikelets. This is a highly medicinal ce-

real, being blood-cooling and heating to the internal organs, especially acting upon the kidneys in a most beneficial way. Because of its blood-cooling property, this is one of the favored cereals of the Arabs, both for themselves and for their prized purebred horses. Rich in all minerals, especially iron; very rich in the B vitamin complex.

☸ Use, internal: Treatment of all blood disorders, ailments of the bladder and kidneys, as a food for invalids and infants, and as a general nutritive food and nerve tonic.

▣ Dose: Barley is one of the few cereals which can be eaten raw, after merely soaking in water for several days, preferably exposed to sunlight. It can also be eaten soaked overnight and then lightly boiled. Or fire parch it, then grind and eat it mixed with water and olive oil to form a dough, as the Berber Arabs do. Or grind into a fine flour and make into bread. The water from boiled and well-squeezed barley, with honey and lemon juice added, makes an excellent drink. A Turkish peasant method, of which I make much use for my family and for my hounds, is to soak raw barley grains in water with lumps of salty sheep or goat milk cheese for two days. (Keep covered with a fine mesh cloth.) The whey from the cheese softens the grain, and also makes it very palatable and ready for eating without any cooking.

Basil

Ocimum basilicum. Labiatae

Found in woodlands and on riverbanks. Basil has shiny oval leaves and whorls of small white hooded flowers. Known as "sweet basil," it has an alluring scent and was once much used in "white magic." I can believe it. This herb fascinates me, and I make much use of it as food and medicine. The Jews hold sprays of basil in their hands to give them strength during religious fasts. It is *l'herbe royale* of France, and was fed to the young princes as a regular item of diet.

☸ Use, internal: It is a powerful tonic, stimulant and nerve remedy. Will relieve nausea and severe vomiting. A remedy for

indigestion. Externally applied as a rub, it is used against bites of snakes, scorpions and poisonous spiders. It is an insecticide. I use the whorls of flowers, steeped in olive oil, to flavor olives.

Bilberry

Vaccinium myrtillus. Ericaceae

Found on heaths and dry hillsides. Leaves small, shaded from green to red-brown. Fleshy pinkish flowers form round and very juicy, pungent-tasting dark blue berries, very cool to the mouth and throat. The plant is highly astringent. It yields a useful blue dye from the berries.

Use, internal: To check prolonged dysentery and vomiting. A good drink in fevers. A mild worm remedy. For all nervous ailments. The Gypsies make a tonic tea from the young leaves.

Use, external: As a gargle or wash for throat and sinus ailments. For treatment of piles.

Dose: A handful or more of the berries three times daily, or a small cupful of the pressed juice morning and night. For a tea, use one tablespoon of the leaves to one and a half cupfuls of water. For external use, crush the berries and apply, or make a strong brew from the leaves, two tablespoons to two cupfuls of water. Caution: the berry juice stains clothing.

Bindweed

Convolvulus arvensis. Convolvulaceae

Found in hedgerows and pastures as a climbing plant. Has heart-shaped leaves and thin, twisting stems. Flowers are white, pale pink or blue, and are bell-shaped.

Use, internal: As a tonic and cleanser of the blood. Also helpful in dropsy. A fertility herb.

Dose: Three or four flowers eaten in salad twice daily. Or a brew from the twisting stems. Of the brew, take a tablespoon morning and night.

Bistort

Polygonum bistorta. Polygonaceae

This plant of the buckwheat family is found in moist meadows. It is distinguished by its flesh-colored flowers on short stalks with bracts at base, many jointed stems and large twisted root. The root is the part used.

❁ Use, internal and ❀ external: The bitter root is unrivaled as an astringent and is therefore excellent for gargles for ailments of mouth, throat and ears, and as a cure for prolonged dysentery. A popular treatment for internal ulcers. Will expel worms. The dried, powdered root makes a good remedy to stem serious bleeding from wounds or for treatment of hemorrhages.

▣ Dose: Pieces of root in all to measure about six inches, finely sliced and made up into a Standard Brew using a cup of water. Boil for five minutes, keeping covered as always. Take two tablespoons of the brew before meals or use as a gargle or wash.

Blackberry

Rubus fruticosus. Rosaceae

Found in hedgerows, woodlands and by streamsides, blackberry or bramble is well known and widespread. It is distinguished by its prickly foliage and stems, white, rose-form flowers and big, juicy, black fruits. A plant rich in medicinal properties. Other species of *Rubus* (such as raspberry, loganberry, and dewberry) share the same properties.

❁ Use, internal: To cool the blood, tonify the nerves, relieve anemia, ease general debility, clear blood and skin disorders. A pregnancy tonic. An effective remedy for prolonged diarrhea.

❀ Use, external: The brew, drunk daily and applied as a lotion, is a famed cure for eczema. Fresh leaves are warmed over a fire and applied by Gypsies to heal and soothe sores.

▣ Dose: Eat as many of the raw, ripe berries as desired. For infants, make a juice from the berries. Or use a Standard Brew of the leaves, one cupful sweetened with honey.

Boneset

Eupatorium perfoliatum. Compositae

Found in damp places. Has rough and hairy stems. Leaves also rather hairy. Flowers are white or creamy, and very numerous. Named after King Eupator, king of Pontus, who discovered and extolled the medicinal uses of this plant. Its common name of boneset came from the success obtained with this plant in speeding the setting of broken bones and soothing aching ones.

❁ Use, internal: It is useful in all forms of fevers and colds, and in all bone weakness from rickets to tender or aching bones.

▣ Dose: A Standard Brew of the flowering tops or leaves, a half cupful morning and night.

Borage

Borago officinalis. Boraginaceae

Found in fields and woods, likes dry ground. Leaves are rough, flowers of wheel form and brilliant blue shade.

❁ Use, internal: To strengthen the heart and limbs. Mildly laxative, it is good for ailments of the digestive system. A jaundice remedy. Tonic and nervine. Borage is said to cleanse all poisons from the blood. It is used by Arabs as a salad herb; the women eat it to increase their milk when nursing babies. Borage is always linked with courage (*"cor"* is Latin for "heart").

❀ Use, external: Borage is said to have powers against the stings or bites of poisonous creatures such as snakes, scorpions, and rabid dogs. Such ancient claims must of course be seen in their true perspective as indicators of the herb's prophylactic or curative virtues. Externally, the Standard Brew makes an excellent eye lotion. For ringworm, pulp the leaves and squeeze the juice onto the affected patches.

▣ Dose: Eat a small handful of the leaves and flowers, divided into several salad meals, or make a Standard Brew and drink morning and night, a small cupful at a time.

Broom

Cytisus scoparius. Leguminosae

Found on heaths, sandy commons and rocky hillsides. Broom has tiny oval leaves, and pea-form flowers, yellow in color, sweetly and strongly scented. The Spanish Gypsies make a cologne from the flowers.

❁ Use, internal: As a milk vermifuge, to cure worm infestation. Also to treat jaundice and dropsy. To expel poisons from bites by venomous insects. To increase flow of urine in kidney and bladder disease. This plant earned fame in Russia for prevention and cure of rabies. It acts on the lymph and is therefore effective in the treatment of dropsy.

❀ Use, external: A strong brew of the twigs (in water or oil) as a scalp rub against lice. The flowers infused in hot milk, one handful to two cups of milk, are used internally and externally to treat severe skin ailments.

▣ Dose: Steep two tablespoons of broom tops in one and a half cups of boiling water. Take a tablespoon of this brew morning and night. In treatment of hydrophobia it is usual to take a tablespoon every hour.

Burdock

Arctium lappa. Compositae

Found on wasteland and by roadsides. Burdock has large rhubarb-like leaves and thistle-like pale purple flowers which form barbed burrs, which adhere to clothing and to the bodies of animals. It is much disliked as a pasture weed, since it clings to wool and spoils its quality. ("Good for nothing," the farmer said, as he made a sweep at the burdock's head.) All parts are medicinal: roots, leaves and burs. Burdock is one of the most valued plants in herbal medicine.

❁ Use, internal: Remedy for all blood disorders, including the chronic ones: gout, rheumatism, arthritis, sciatica. Burdock rapidly increases the flow of urine.

❀ Use, external: For treatment of burns, scalds, skin irritation, boils, carbuncles, and skin parasites, apply a strong Standard Brew as a lotion. For burns, lay on the bruised leaves and bind in place. The bruised leaves are also a remedy against ringworm.

▦ Dose: One ounce of the bruised, sliced root in three-quarters of a pint of water, simmer for a quarter of an hour and then steep for three hours. Take a small cupful, sweetened with honey, night and morning. In chronic blood disorders, take a cupful three times daily. To make a stronger brew, use more root and add some of the burs as well.

Burnet

Sanguisorba officinalis. Rosaceae

Found on low-lying damp land. Has tall, branching growth, and crowded, small, dark purple flowers. The name of the plant is derived from *sanguis,* "blood," and it is also known as bloodwort. The fleshy leaves are also tapped for sap.

Another species of burnet, salad burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*) is grown and eaten as a valuable salad herb. It is very refreshing and was used in an old English drink known as "cool-tankard." It is a most beneficial and protective herb.

❁ Use, internal: Healing, blood-cooling and tonic. Treatment of all blood disorders.

❀ Use, external: Skin ailments (internal and external treatment), wound healing. To stem the flow of blood from wounds: Pulp up the herb, spread on a gauze cloth and bind onto the wound. For sunburn or eczema, apply the brew as a lotion to the affected parts, or merely bruise the leaves and flowers into a pulp and apply.

▦ Dose: A Standard Brew of the shoots with or without flowers. Take a small cupful morning and night. A half a handful of the leaves and some of the flower whorls can be eaten raw as a salad herb.

Plate 2. 1. Blackberry 2. Borage 3. Broom
4. Burdock 5. Burnet 6. Caper

Cactus, prickly pear

Opuntia ficus-indica. Cactaceae

Found on dry rocky land and along borders of deserts, also widely cultivated. This cactus is planted as a fence around Arab houses and lands, where it makes an effective barrier against intruders, man and animal, and provides food in the healthful edible fruits, and fuel from the old, dried portions of the plant and its roots. Flowers are yellow, rose form, fruits are pear-shaped and golden when ripe. The whole plant is covered with fine, protective hairs which are highly irritating to the human skin, and must be removed from the fruits by rubbing them in sand and then washing them sand-free in running water. All parts are medicinal.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of amoebic dysentery (the flowers are considered a specific remedy). As food (the inner flesh of the leaves). As food and laxative medicine (the fruit).

❀ Use, external: For treatment of wounds and skin ailments (the inner flesh of the leaves).

▣ Dose: The flowers as a treatment for amoebic dysentery are used as follows: A handful of fresh (or less, if dried) flowers to a pint of cold water, bring to the boil, simmer below boiling point for three minutes, steep for three hours, drink a cupful morning and night. The leaves are sliced, stripped of the outer skin, then baked and eaten with lemon, salt and oil. The fruits are freed of the prickles, carefully cut across to remove the outer skin, and eaten raw. The fleshy leaves are also tapped for sap.

Candytuft

Iberis amara. Cruciferae

Found on chalky or rocky land, often as an outcast from gardens. Has small-toothed, shiny leaves, and tufts of flattish flowers, usually white. Named after Iberia, that is, Spain. Favored for centuries by the Spanish peasants. The whole plant is medicinal, and formerly it was carefully cultivated for its curative powers against rheumatism and kindred ailments.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of rheumatism, including the most chronic forms, arthritis, sciatica, gout, Berger's disease, dropsy.

▣ Dose: Make a Standard Brew of the whole plant and take two tablespoons of the brew before meals, or a pinch of the powdered seeds before meals.

Caper

Capparis spinosa. Capparaceae

The thorny caper is a Mediterranean herb found by waysides and in rocky areas. Greyish, shiny foliage and thorny stems. Flowers are beautiful, pale purple with numerous prominent stamens of darker purple. The buds are pickled in vinegar by the Arabs. The fruits are used in the pickle industry. Both buds and fruits are a powerful tonic.

❁ Use, internal: Capers stimulate the digestive juices and increase appetite. They are tonic, eaten as a pickle or cooked vegetable. Capers are good added to mayonnaise. The fruits are sold in bottles in most good groceries.

For *homemade capers* merely gather four handfuls of the young buds (seedpods of common garden nasturtiums can also be used) and place in a jar with a pint of natural vinegar, four to five bay leaves, and several peeled cloves of garlic. Cap well and shake frequently. When the capers are fully soft (about three weeks) they are ready to eat. The caper vinegar is refreshing and healthful.

Caraway

Carum carvi. Umbelliferae

Found on dry banks and waste-places. It has feathery leaves which emit the well-known anise scent when bruised, umbels of creamy yellow flowers which bear the small, dark, half-moon seeds known in confectionery as well as in medicine. The seed is the part for which the caraway herb is famed, excelling as a tonic for all the organs of digestion. For that reason caraway seed came to be used in cakes and breads.

❁ Use, internal: For all the digestive ailments. To expel wind in infants, to expel internal gas and soothe the digestive tract. To increase appetite and sweeten the bowels. To tone the liver and stimulate flow of bile. To take with other laxatives to lessen griping. Caraway strengthens and gives tone to the whole digestive tract, and also influences beneficially the liver and gall bladder.

❁ Use, external: The American Indians made a valued embrocation from wild anise or caraway leaves steeped in buffalo oil (a vegetable oil is preferable).

▣ Dose: A half teaspoon of the seeds chewed before meals. For infants, brew a half teaspoon of seeds in a cup of hot water and give a teaspoon of the liquid, warm, before meals. When cooked in cakes and bread, caraway adds a pleasant aromatic flavor, but its medicinal properties are greatly diminished.

The leaves are also edible and medicinal, but much milder than the seeds. Try a few sprays of them chopped up in salads.

Carrot

Daucus carota. Umbelliferae

Found wild in damp places and hedgerows, and cultivated in gardens. There is a poisonous member of this plant family which much resembles wild carrot, so care should be taken when gathering the wild herb. The appearance of the garden carrot is well known; it has a thick, juicy, orange-colored root and green ferny leaves.The entire carrot plant possesses great medicinal powers.

❁ Use, internal: The garden carrot is used as food and medicine. As a food it is a tonic rich in vitamins and minerals. Because of its liver tonifying properties it has a good effect also on the eyes and is recommended to improve eyesight. Carrot is a remedy for anemia, jaundice, internal ulcers (the juice), worms (the grated root), styes in eyelids, and twitching eyes (the juice applied), also for kidney and bladder troubles (the grated root eaten or a strong tea made from the leaves). Grated raw carrots eaten daily give relief in painful menstruation. A strong tea of the blossoms is effective in dropsy and all lymphatic ailments,

also varicose veins. Being rich in a natural insulin, carrots are excellent food and medicine for diabetic patients (though in ignorance, because they are sweet, they are often banned for diabetics). Carrot is recognized by herbalists as being a most beneficial herb in cases of cancer.

❀ Use, external: The grated root, made into a fresh poultice and applied to bad wounds, old sores, swellings, and tumors is soothing and curative.

▣ Dose: There is no specific dose; eat as much raw carrot daily as the body will tolerate. A pint to a quart of the juice is advised in severe illness such as anemia, cancer. The leaves are bitter, but a few pieces can be chopped fine and sprinkled on the salad. The flowers should be made into a Standard Brew, and a teaspoonful taken daily before meals. Or a small wineglassful, sweetened with honey, can be taken morning and night.

Castor oil plant

Ricinus communis. Euphorbiaceae

Found wild in woodland or pasture, cultivated in gardens, parks. The castor bean shrub sometimes reaches tree proportions. It has palm-like leaves which may span several feet. Its flowers are red and plume-like. The fruit is a bean which yields the well-known pharmacy product *castor oil*, famed as a speedy purge. This small palm was called *Palma Christi* in medieval Latin, when its great healing powers gave it association with one of the most famed of all healers, Jesus Christ. It is also called "Christ's Hand," not only because the leaves have resemblance to a human hand outspread, but because the touch of the leaves and the extracted oil from the seeds heal many disorders.

❀ Use, internal: A prompt and powerful laxative. Castor oil usually induces constipation after use and should not be used as a regular laxative, but only when a speedy and powerful cathartic is required, and then only for one or two days of treatment. Of great use in poisoning. Removes intestinal worms, including tapeworm.

❀ Use, external: The leaves make a powerful drawing poultice when bound over wounds, sores, swellings, tumors, old injuries. Frequent external applications reduce warts and tumors. The oil is an effective rub for inflamed skin, bruises, to prevent falling hair and to grow new hair (where the hair follicles are not totally withered). Moles are known to desert their burrows when castor oil seeds are sprinkled within.

▣ Dose: Three tablespoons of the oil as a speedy purge for an adult person, less for a child. Castor oil is not recommended for infants. As a *poultice*, bruise a half dozen leaves, of size big enough to cover the area requiring treatment, and bind into place, excluding air. As a rub, several teaspoons of the oil. It is best used hot. A good mixture for using as a *rub to reduce tumors* and to cure skin ailments such as ringworm and mange is two parts castor oil to one part wine vinegar, used hot, and massaged into the area night and morning. Add a little lemon juice to the spoon before pouring the castor oil into the spoon; it will prevent adherence of the oil to the spoon and subsequent waste.

Catnip

Nepeta cataria. Labiatae

Found in hedges and on waste-places. Greyish, strongly scented. Flowers white or pale lavender, hooded. Cats eat the leaves for their medicinal properties and like to roll in this plant — hence its name. It is an ancient herbal remedy, especially good for babies and young children, but is excellent for the old as well.

❀ Use, internal: Pain relief — pains of all kinds, but especially those associated with digestion, menstruation. To cure spasms in colic, whooping cough. To expel wind and intestinal gas, cure hiccups and ease stomach spasms. Catnip is very soothing to the nerves.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the leaf sprays and flowers, a wineglass morning and night. Children: a teaspoon of the Standard Brew, before meals, sweetened with honey. (*Publisher's Note*: Honey is not recommended for children less than one year old.)

Cayenne pepper

Capsicum annuum. Solanaceae

Except in Africa and South America where it grows wild, cayenne is found only as a garden plant. Its name comes from the Greek word *kapto*, "I bite," for it is a biting herb with fire in its pods. It has oval, shiny green leaves and drooping small white flowers which form green pods, which turn red when ripe. Cayenne has been used by American and Mexican Indians and African natives throughout their histories, and is still in use today.

☸ Use, internal: As a supreme and harmless internal disinfectant. I first learnt its use from the Mexican Indians, who use cayenne pepper as an internal disinfectant to overcome the dangers of impure food. The Indians, often having to eat unclean food, suffer no ill effects because they sprinkle powdered cayenne peppers freely as a condiment on most of their eatables. I was able to risk raw milk daily for my children, even from cows and goats of uncertain health, as I cut half a pod of cayenne into every cup of milk and let it steep, knowing it would destroy harmful bacteria. The pepper gave the milk a hot, biting taste, but my children learnt to take it with pleasure. I think that this treatment is far better than the harmful pasteurizing of milk which destroys the sensitive life-giving powers. There are no exact measures, as pepper plants themselves differ in strength, so add as much pepper as the drinker of the milk can tolerate without the mouth and throat burning too fiercely. The burning sensation of cayenne pepper is beneficial, never harmful, and soon passes off. I also learnt to use the dried powdered peppers as fumigation against insect pests and rodents when living in primitive places where such things are found in human dwellings.

Cayenne pepper, because it is antispasmodic as well as intensely stimulating, has earned a reputation for giving relief in heart attacks. An ancient cure for all types of fevers. Treats rheumatism, arthritis, jaundice and Berger's paresthesia. Sprinkled freely inside the socks, will warm chilled feet; likewise used against frostbite. To expel worms. A tonic for all organs of the body,

including the heart. Said to increase fertility and defer senility.

❀ Use, external: For severe wounds, seriously infected wounds, and old sores, disinfect by covering the place with the powdered cayenne. It will burn and smart for a brief time in the way that lemon juice does when applied to wounds, but this is harmless and highly curative. For *fumigation*, sprinkle several tablespoonfuls of the powdered pepper on a tin lid, place it over a slow flame, seal up all the shed or room, and allow the pepper to fume until all burnt up. Renew several times if necessary. Cayenne is a pungent fumigator detested by vermin, but it is not poisonous in any way, and any place treated with cayenne can be used very soon after fumigation. In ancient times such fumigation was considered a protection against vampires and werewolves.

▣ Dose: A half teaspoon or more in a large cupful of tepid water. Take as much as can be tolerated, morning and night, at least one hour before or after a meal. At one time, and I have no record of the degree of success achieved, a large pinch was sprinkled frequently on the tongue during a heart attack. I cannot emphasize too often the point I have already made: that while modern medicine has made some of these ancient remedies sound not only futile but almost cynically dangerous, it is still worth mentioning them for the sake of the germ of truth contained. It is as foolish to contend that no advance has been made on old herbal lore as it is to turn a blind eye on those herbs which no synthetic product can fully replace.

Celandine, greater

Chelidonium majus. Papaveraceae

Found in waste-places, amongst rubble and on old walls. Its foliage is rather hairy and of yellowish tint; the flowers are small, poppy-shaped, bright yellow, and produce horned fruits. The greyish stems, when broken, yield an acrid orange juice. The plant yields a natural dye. Greater celandine has many internal uses in herbal medicine, but as it possesses slightly poisonous properties, I am only advising its *external* use, for which this herb is rightly famed.

❀ Use, external: To make a soothing and healing eye lotion, boil two teaspoons of cut herb — including the flowers when possible — in two cups of water. When cold, add one part of the herb brew to one part of raw milk, and bathe the eyes in this. Bathe the eyes thrice daily. For warts: Use the raw juice pressed from the main stems and rubbed directly onto the warts. Renew three times daily.

Celandine, lesser

Ranunculus ficaria. Ranunculaceae

Known also as "pilewort," lesser celandine has nothing in common with the greater celandine, except in name and in being also a medicinal herb. Found in marshy places and by sides of rivers and streams. Leaves are heart-shaped and shiny, flowers starry and a glossy, bright yellow. A low-growing plant.

❀ Use, external: A salve made from the pulped raw leaves rubbed into cold cream or lanolin, and applied to piles, gatherings, swellings, gives much relief and will often cure the trouble.

Celery

Apium graveolens. Umbelliferae

Wild celery, from which the garden celery is developed, likes damp places by sea or river, or marshland, but it will also seed itself in rich soil in gardens. *Apium* was the Latin name for either wild parsley or wild celery. Its leaves are somewhat similar to those of common parsley but much wider, and the whole plant is much taller. Flowers are in umbels, small, white to yellow. The whole plant has a strong pungent, biting scent from the oil, *apiol*, found principally in its leaves. The whole plant is used, root to seed.

❀ Use, internal: For joint pain and pain in the nerves, and all liver ailments, including jaundice. Will steady the nerves, ease high blood pressure, improve eyesight. Celery is one of the best herbs for prevention and cure of all forms of rheumatic ailments,

also arthritis, sciatica, and neuralgia. A remedy for dropsy and tumors. Removes stomach gas, will restore appetite; especially good for children in this respect. Will cure swollen stomach in adults and children. Restores appetite to old and young.

▩ Dose: Eat daily as much as possible of the raw stems, grated raw roots, grated raw leaves.The seeds are rich in natural soda and are therefore a valuable tonic. Use the powdered seeds as celery salt (not the same as celery-flavored salt) in larger amounts than you would common table salt.

Centaury

Erythraea centaurium

or *Centaurea umbellatum* or *C. vulgare*. Compositae

Found in fields and hilly places, and on sea cliffs. Leaves are tiny and narrow, slender and smooth, the lower ones in a rosette; flowers are in panicles, star-shaped and pale pink, occasionally red. The whole plant is very bitter.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of jaundice, enlarged liver, biliousness. Blood impurities, eczema. It is one of the best of the bitter tonics, sharing the fame of gentian, and is highly prized by the American Indians. A remedy for all ailments of blood and liver, centaury is also famed as a female remedy in all faintness following birth or birth infections. A vermifuge, including a liver fluke remedy.

❁ Use, external: As a lotion for all types of sores and wounds, and to cleanse sore mouths and to cool inflamed gums. Externally it is used for wound treatment and to deter mosquitoes.

▩ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the whole herb, two tablespoons before meals. For liver flukes, make pills of one ounce centaury minced into balls with fat and flour. As a birth remedy, make pills the same way but use honey instead of fat.

Externally: Use the brew freely, pouring onto wounds, and as a rinse for mouth and gums.

Chamomile

Chamaemelum nobile. Compositae

Found in waste-places and as a garden weed. Leaves are feathery, flowers are small, white, and daisy-like, with yellow centers. Chamomile is a very fragrant herb, of sweet apple scent. The flowers yield an oil much used by Arab herbalists. It is recognized by the orthodox medical profession as a valuable medicine for the young, especially in France and Spain where numerous doctors prescribe it. One of the best remedies for infants' ailments.

Incidentally, chamomile may be planted to replace grass seed on turf where drought conditions prevent a lawn from growing normally and keeping green. When bruised by treading, the chamomile lawn yields a refreshing aroma. Although such a lawn will keep green without watering, it cannot stand such hard wear as can grass.

❁ Use, internal: The most popular use is as a tea for its soothing, cleansing, and tonic properties. Used in the treatment of ulcers, tumors, lassitude due to congestion and poor body tone. Equally useful for female ailments. The brew of dried or fresh flowers is particularly useful as a febrifuge. As a cure for insomnia and depression.

❀ Use, external: A well-known brightener for fair hair is a lotion of the flower heads, made according to the recipe on page 182, but substituting chamomile flowers for the sage and rosemary. Use as a final rinse. It is one of the best of all eye lotions. Soothes and heals inflamed gums. To make a poultice to relieve pain and reduce tumors: Mix one handful of chamomile with one handful linseed and a handful of poppy heads; crush or powder the herbs, mix with boiling water, spread on a flannel and apply.

▩ Dose: An infusion of the dried leaves can be used, but a Standard Brew of fresh leaves and flower heads is preferable when these are obtainable. To be taken by the cupful, like any other tea, and as the pungent oils yield their flavor readily, it is best to dilute and sweeten with a teaspoon of honey per cup when the patient is young.

Plate 3. 1. Celandine (Greater) 2. Centaury 3. Chamomile
4. Chickweed 5. Chicory 6. Cinquefoil

Chervil

Anthriscus cerefolium. Umbelliferae

Found in hedgerows and around gardens, chervil has delicate, feathery leaves which emit an agreeable scent when bruised. The name chervil comes from the Greek "to rejoice," and alludes to the fragrance of the plant.

The umbels of the flowers are small and colorless. The fruit has a long beak which gives this plant an alternative name of "garden beaked parsley." If you grow it, make frequent small sowings in rows, as you would for parsley.

Use, internal: This is an old-fashioned pot herb, once much used in cookery. Its medicinal properties are also useful as it tones up the whole body, especially the brain, and is a good digestive remedy. Use as a tonic tea to tone up the blood and nerves. Good for poor memory and mental depression. Sweetens the entire digestive system. Well known as a flavoring for salads, and used in butter sauces and omelettes.

Dose: Eat a few sprigs daily in a salad, and add finely grated, raw, to sauces, mayonnaise, omelettes. Gives a good flavor when mixed with bread dough and baked in loaves of bread — sometimes used in this way in Provence, France.

Chickweed

Stellaria media. Caryophyllaceae

Found in fields and plowed land. Usually indicates a rich soil. Leaves are small, soft and rather yellowish. Flowers are tiny and held within green bracts. It has a good taste and therefore can be eaten freely in salads when it is still young, before it turns stringy.

This is one of the few wild herbs rich in copper and iron which is palatable. This small herb, often classed as a troublesome weed, is one of the supreme healers of the herbal kingdom and has given me wonderful results. It is equally beneficial used externally and internally, and fortunately is almost evergreen, growing well in mid-winter and continuing into the late summer.

❁ Use, internal: As a soothing and healing demulcent agent for the whole digestive system; cures ulcers of stomach and elsewhere. For all internal inflammation, from bowels to lungs. For colitis. This small herb possesses many of the healing properties of that famed remedy of the American Indians, slippery elm tree bark. Eaten as a salad, chickweed improves the eyesight.

❀ Use, external: Chickweed possesses remarkable drawing powers, absorbing quantities of impurities when applied to the skin. For irritations of the genitals. For cure of all types of skin sores, including erysipelas. For such eye ailments as ulcers, styes.

▣ Dose: A handful eaten raw twice daily, chopped fine into a salad. Or, of a Standard Brew, a small cupful three times daily, before meals. Externally the herb can be applied as a lotion, but the best skin application is the fresh herb, washed, and then applied directly on the wound, sore, ulcer, stye, or other infection. Hold it in place by covering with larger washed leaves, such as cabbage, lettuce or geranium, and then binding with cotton bandages. Change the chickweed every three hours or so, applying fresh. The spent chickweed will be very hot and drenched with the impurities it has drawn out from the skin.

Chicory

Cichorium intybus. Compositae

Found in pastures and on riverbanks. Likes a rich soil, for it is very deep rooting. Leaves are small, greyish, oval. Stems and root are tough. Flowers are strap-petalled, wheel-shaped, of a beautiful blue and very numerous. The long taproot of this plant, which taps the lower mineral layers of the soil, contains many excellent medicinal properties. An important tonic herb. Bitter tasting as it is, the long roots and leaves are still quite edible. These roots, gently roasted and then ground, are a well-known substitute for, or a mixture with, coffee. The roots are also eaten boiled and are a popular food with Arab villagers. This herb takes its name from the Arabic *chicouryeh.* Witloof is the garden variety, grown for its roots rather than its salad leaves.

❁ Use, internal: The whole plant is a valuable digestive and nerve tonic, and an excellent remedy for jaundice and all liver disorders. Also for anemia, weak sight, infertility. Will restore appetite, tone up the entire digestive system and strengthen the digestive juices.

▣ Dose: Eat as many as possible of the young leaves, fresh, natural, or blanched, in a daily salad. A half dozen of the flowers can also be eaten. The older leaves can be eaten lightly boiled, as can the roots. The roots can be used as a beverage instead of coffee (see recipe for dandelion coffee, page 54), and they possess superior health properties and no harmful drugging elements.

Chives

Allium schoenopraesum. Liliaceae

Known also as chive-garlic. Found in damp meadows. Leaves grasslike. The plant's name means "rush-leaved onion." It only grows a few inches high, bears round, onion-type balls of purple flowers.

❁ Use, internal: A general tonic and blood cleanser. Improves appetite. Chives possess all the pungent, antiseptic powers of onions in a mild form, and are one of the best means of giving onion elements to infants.

▣ Dose: A spoonful of the leaves chopped fine with salad or between bread slices, once or twice a day. Or chop up in cream cheese, sprinkle on potatoes.

Cinquefoil

Potentilla canadensis. Rosaceae

Found on wasteland and along roadsides. Leaves are of attractive silver color, five-fingered, of palm tree form. Flowers, single, yellow, flattish, and five-petalled. This herb is not much used, which is a pity, for it is very powerful. It is seldom mentioned in herbals, yet its botanical name — from the word *potens* (powerful) — alludes to its medicinal powers. I value this herb very much.

❁ Use, internal: Epilepsy and all hysterical disorders. Cinquefoil is a nerve sedative and a general astringent.

❀ Use, external: As a wash for wounds of all kinds, and for sore mouth or gums. As a gargle for inflamed or ulcerated throats. To be syringed into the nostrils to cure sinus infections.

▣ Dose: Infuse a large handful of cinquefoil leaves in a pint bottle of white wine and take a wineglassful morning and evening. Or make a Standard Brew and use as a wash or gargle.

Cleavers

Galium aparine. Rubiaceae

A climbing plant found in hedgerows and fields where there are bushes. Small leaves and tiny, almost colorless flowers which are succeeded by small, prickly, ball-shaped fruits. This "goose grass" is notable for its hairy stems, armed with hooked bristles which cling to other vegetation and to passing animals.

❁ Use, internal: Cleavers is rich in minerals, especially silica, which exerts a powerful influence on hair and teeth. It is refrigerant, laxative and tonic, and is much used in diseases of the urinary system. Its refrigerant properties make it excellent for all fevers, including smallpox and typhus. For skin troubles, including dandruff. It is also an effective jaundice remedy. Treatment of bladder and kidney ailments, including stone and gravel, inflammation of the kidneys, suppression of urine, scalding urine. Derangement of liver and gallbladder. Rheumatism, arthritis, dropsy. Taken internally, cleavers is also a hair tonic and does much to help check tooth decay. An old-time farm workers' tonic added to beer.

❀ Use, external: Cleavers makes a great poultice to reduce tumors, and is useful for all skin disorders, including skin cancer, abscesses, tumors, cysts. An old remedy for scrofula, although of course the reduction of scrofular swellings is only a small part of the story, with scrofula sometimes indicating phthisis. As a lotion to cleanse the complexion of acne and other impurities. As an underarm lotion to neutralize acid perspiration.

▣ Dose: A handful of the fresh herb, pounded small and infused in milk. Take two tablespoons before meals. Or make an infusion by macerating a large handful of the plant in a cup of near-boiling water. Keep the water warm for half an hour, then drink the resulting brew. A small cupful before meals. Or cleavers can be eaten as spinach. Not very palatable, but tolerable.

Clover, red

Trifolium pratense. Leguminosae

Found in pastures and gardens. Leaves are trefoil shape, sometimes mottled with a paler shade. Flowers are purple-pink (not really red) globes and are richly honey-scented. Considered by herbalists as being a God-given remedy. Often called "the prize herb," it is much valued for its alkaline property. A pleasant-tasting herb, red clover is beneficial to young and old, and helps in a long list of ailments, whether mild or chronic.

❁ Use, internal: There are so many uses for red clover that it is useless to try to list them. Especially good for cleansing the blood, soothing the nerves, promoting sleep, and restoring fertility. It is one of the few herbs known to exert a beneficial influence on cancer of all types, and success has been recorded by herbalists, especially in America.

▣ Dose: The flowers are used. A small amount may be eaten raw, shredded into a salad. Make red clover tea by infusing a heaped teaspoonful of the flowers in water just off the boil, allowing to steep well and then sweeten with honey. Or make a Standard Brew for medicinal treatments and take a small cupful before meals.

Clover, white

Trifolium repens. Leguminosae

Found frequently in meadows and pastures. Leaves are similar to those of red clover, but bigger, and the flowers are white to cream-colored and very richly honey-scented.

❁ Use, internal and ❀ external: Similar to red clover, only not so powerful and it has not been known to give any effective results in cancer treatment. This is an old-fashioned but well-proved blood-cleansing herb, also of value externally to heal old sores.

▣ Dose: The flowers are used in the same way as red clover.

Coltsfoot

Tussilago farfara. Compositae

Found on sunny banks and in waste-places. One of the earliest flowers of the springtime. The flowers appear before the leaves. The leaves, almost round, are grey-green, paler on underside and with thick downy "web" on upper surface. They are rather fragrant and retain their scent after drying. The flowers are wheel-form of bright yellow and richly honey-scented. The stems are scaly. The name is derived from *tussis* (a cough) and *ago* (to banish) and refers to the power of this plant to banish coughs. The whole plant is medicinal.

❁ Use, internal: One of the supreme pectoral herbs. Cure of coughs, pneumonia, pleurisy, bronchitis, asthma, tuberculosis. Coltsfoot gives great relief in whooping cough and spasmodic cough. Will expel mucus from throat and lungs. It is also a useful fever herb; the peasants say that it comes in time for the spring fevers.

❀ Use, external: The pounded leaves make a good poultice; apply to swellings and inflammations. The leaves can also be applied to the lung area as an external pack thusly: Soak cotton in a Standard Brew of the leaves and apply hot to the pulmonary region.The dried leaves are popular amongst Gypsies as a smoking "tobacco." Use the dried, powdered leaves as you would use snuff, sniffing up the nostrils to remove obstructions of the nasal passages and to relieve sinus infections.

▣ Dose: Make a Standard Brew and take a wineglassful three times daily. In coughs, take spoonfuls of this brew sweetened with honey every few hours.

Plate 4. 1. Cleavers 2. Coltsfoot 3. Comfrey
4. Coriander 5. Cornflower 6. Couch Grass

Comfrey

Symphytum officinale. Boraginaceae

Found wild in Europe in damp places, by ditches and similar sites. In North America it is strictly a cultivated garden plant. Its leaves are oval and rough; the flowers are pale blue-pink (flowers of the wild varieties are yellowish), bell-form and borne in drooping clusters. The borage family of plants is a wonderful one in herbal medicine, and comfrey is the greatest of the group. I think so highly of this plant that I have taken the trouble to import plants from England for cultivation in my garden in Galilee. It is, indeed, another of the small company of "wonder herbs," being good for almost every ill of mankind. The leaves, stems and roots are the parts used.

Use, internal: Comfrey's greatest repute is for its strong powers in the knitting of fractures and broken bones, and the strengthening of strained or weak ligaments and muscles, hence its country name of "knit-bone." Also a remedy for rheumatism, arthritis and allied ailments. Its mucilaginous content, especially rich in the root, makes comfrey an important remedy for all disorders of the lungs, including tuberculosis. For treatment of internal ulcers. You can rub the leaves on a grater and add to sour milk as a vitamin-rich tonic.

Use, external: The leaves make a valued poultice for all types of bruises, swellings and sprains, ruptures, protruding navel and infections of the navel. Also old and new sores, even gangrenous forms, and for burns, whitlows, thorns and splinters in the flesh. Also as an insecticide, the fresh leaves used as a rub.

Dose: Eat three or four medium-sized fresh leaves twice daily (the leaves are rough to the mouth and somewhat bitter, but tolerably palatable). Or the fresh leaves can be cut small and mixed into salad or a dish of potatoes. Of a Standard Brew, a cupful taken before meals.

Externally: A cotton cloth can be wrung in the heated brew, when quite hot, and applied to the ailing parts. A poultice is made of the fresh leaves; pulp them first to reduce their rough-

ness and then bind where required, layering them inside a fine cotton wool pad. A pack of the fresh leaves is prepared as above, on account of their roughness, and is applied to the navel, held in place with bandages soaked also in comfrey brew. The well-bruised roots can be used instead of the leaves, or with the leaves.

Coriander

Coriandrum sativum. Umbelliferae

Found in fields and around gardens. Leaves are dark green and fanlike, rather broad for a member of the Umbelliferae. Flowers, small, in umbels, pinkish white in color. Its leaves have a peculiar scent when bruised, and the plant is related by name to a word meaning "bug." Misnamed! I find its odor rather fetid but agreeable. The leaves are much used as a tonic flavoring herb, especially in South America and China. It is sometimes called "Chinese parsley." The leaves and seeds are used to improve the taste of other herbs when these are not palatable.

Use, internal: A tonic for the stomach and strengthening to the heart. To cure chronic indigestion, griping pains in the stomach and bowels, or pains in childbirth.

Dose: Three or four sprays of leaves, eaten raw as a salad herb. Or a half-teaspoon of the seeds, mixed with honey and eaten raw before meals. Or of a tea from the seeds, several tablespoons sweetened with honey, before meals.

Corn

Zea mays. Poaceae

Found in pastures and on hill slopes, and, of course, also widely cultivated, being one of the most important cereals. Leaves grass-form but very broad and shining. Flowers are white and feathery, both male and female. The corn kernels formed from the female are well known and have many medicinal uses, as well as providing a valued and much-used cereal food for people and animals. The

leaves of the cob (ear) and the inner silk are also medicinal.

❁ Use, internal: As a food for young and old. Corn is the only known cereal which alone can sustain life, without other food, over a long period. Dieticians say that the superb teeth and hair of the Mexicans are due to their basic diet of corn. The individual grains resemble human teeth. Corn contains a rich oil as well as high quality starch, minerals and vitamins. Cornmeal (whole grain) makes an excellent addition to milk as a food for infants. The kernels, when young, should be eaten raw off the cob as a supreme and good-tasting health food. Cornmeal can be cooked like rice, using a little corn oil and the appropriate amount of cold water. The traditional flavoring is garlic and cayenne peppers. Corn also contains sugar milk for strengthening the bones. It acts as a liver tonic.

The silk, found around the kernels, is one of the most useful remedies for all ailments of kidneys and bladder. It soothes troubles of the prostate gland (used internally and externally on the genitals), and it is said to be a remedy against bed-wetting in children. The silk can be eaten — and some *should* be — raw when fresh, or make a tea using one tablespoon of the fresh silk, or a half tablespoon of the dried, to one cup of water, and make a Standard Brew. Sweeten with molasses, preferably.

❁ Use, external: The inner, tender leaves, bound over wounds and sores, promote healing and draw out offensive matter. The fresh (or the soaked dried) silk can be applied as a poultice. Good for drawing pus from boils, and old or infected wounds. Applied as a thick pack and bound into place with a wet cloth.

Note: Fresh corn on the cob dries up very quickly after being harvested and then it is no longer possible to eat it raw, which is the most healthful way. I have found a method of prolonging its freshness for a full week even without electrical refrigeration: Merely stand the gathered cobs in a shallow dish of cold water, their stems, at the base of the cobs, in the water and keep the cobs well shaded by hooding over with brown paper bags to exclude all light. Keep in a cool place.

Cornflower

Centaurea cyanus. Compositae

Found in cornfields. Has narrow leaves and brilliant, thistle-form, blue flowers.

❁ Use, internal: Its nervine powers are highly rated by herbalists. A proven eye remedy, helpful in many forms of non-structural eye disorders, from weak sight to chronic inflammation and corneal ulcers. As a tea to soothe and cure the nervous system, a remedy in certains forms of temporary paralysis, also for nervous indigestion.

❀ Use, external: For treatment of eye ailments, insect bites (including that of the scorpion) and wounds.

▣ Dose: A few flowers can be eaten raw in a salad, also make a tea of the flowers and take a cup twice daily. Improved with the addition of aromatic herbs such as rosemary or thyme.

Couch grass

Agropyron repens. Poaceae

Found on wasteland and in pastures and gardens, couch grass or twitch grass is considered a most troublesome weed. Its leaves are long, coarse and very tough; its roots are runner-form, white and fleshy and jointed; flower spikes are brownish. Dogs eat this grass with relish to cleanse themselves through mouth and bowels, so it is often called "dog grass." Cats also use it.

❁ Use, internal: Known for many beneficial effects, also a good spring tonic. For all urinary ailments, including inflammation of kidneys and bladder, bladder or kidney stones, gravel, bladder infections, cystitis. Also jaundice, gallstones, constipation.

▣ Dose: The leaves can be boiled quickly (like spinach) and eaten; they will have to be well chewed, as they are tough. Or a strong brew may be made from the roots, a heaped tablespoonful of the roots (cut into small pieces) in one and half cups of water. Bring the cold water to the boil, simmer for three minutes, allow to steep well, and take in cupfuls, sweetened with honey or molasses, one cup morning and night.

Cowslip

Primula veris. Primulaceae

Found in meadows and on sunny slopes. Likes chalky soils. Leaves are pale and long, oval; flowers are graceful and drooping, bright yellow and of small, primrose form, in pale calyxes, very richly honey-scented. A favorite Gypsy herb. Makes a good nerve tonic tea as well as a powerful medicine.

❁ Use, internal: For nervous ailments, including headache, hysteria, fits, sleeplessness. Its properties are nervine, extremely calming to the nervous system. Treats chorea and epilepsy. To induce sleep when pain is present. In a concentrated form, cowslip is an anesthetic.

▣ Dose: Six to eight flower heads eaten with salad, twice daily. Or make a Standard Brew from the flower heads, and take a small cupful, morning and night, sweetened with honey.

Crab apple

Malus sylvestris. Rosaceae

Found in woods and hedges as a small shrub. Has narrow oval leaves with deep-cut edges. Flowers are small, stalked, white and fragrant, in clusters, flowering in early spring. Fruits are small, round, red or yellow, and are the origin of the domestic apple, the name being *abhall* in Gaelic. From crab apples was made the old-fashioned and potent magic drink, verjuice.

❁ Use, internal: Tonic and cleansing, anti-scabies. A cure for all stomach and bowel disorders, and for diarrhea.

▣ Dose: Eaten as a fruit. A half cupful. For diarrhea it is taken pulped, scalded with hot (not boiling) water, in half cupful doses three times daily, sweetened lightly with honey.

Cranesbill

Geranium maculatum. Geraniaceae

Found in hedgerows and near woodlands. Leaves are rounded with scalloped edges; plants are small, purple-pink, of geranium

form. The fruits have a long barb, like the beak of a crane, hence its common name. The root is highly medicinal; as an astringent it has few equals, in fact.

❁ Use, internal: A powerful astringent, both for internal and external use. Treatment of dysentery, diarrhea, colitis. Also mouth and throat infections, wounds, hemorrhages.

❀ Use, external: To stop undue bleeding after extraction of teeth, sprinkle the bleeding area with the dried, powdered root.

▣ Dose: A teaspoonful of the powdered root to a cupful of water, morning and night. Or make a Standard Brew from similar measures, a teaspoonful to a cupful of water, and take two tablespoons of the brew three times daily before meals. As cranesbill root is mild and free from unpleasant taste, it can be given to infants and invalids without difficulty.

Currant, Black

Ribes nigrum. Grossulariaceae

Found wild in woodlands, cultivated in gardens. Foliage is rose-like and possesses a pungent scent. Flowers are small, whitish, forming clusters of very juicy, purple-black berries. The fruit is especially used by herbalists for its beneficial action upon mouth and throat. Because of this property, the fruit is often known as "quinsy berry."

❁ Use, internal: Cooling (refrigerant) and soothing, also nervine. For oral and throat ailments; strengthens the gums. Treatment of fevers, especially in infants. To cure anemia, prevent miscarriage, and for most disorders of pregnancy. A dysentery remedy; a good vitamin source.

▣ Dose: In fevers and throat ailments, a wineglassful of the juice pressed from the fresh berries, every three hours if possible. Or make a Standard Brew from the leaves. The fresh juice is preferable. Against miscarriage, eat freely of the berries; when not available, take a morning cupful of a brew of the leaves. Black currant puree is sometimes available in cans or jars from good-class stores.

Currant, red

Ribes rubrum. Grossulariaceae

Similar to black currant. Although this bush plant is called red currant, the fruits are often white, especially in the wild state. Although more powerfully laxative and refrigerant than the black species, it does not possess the same strong curative powers for throat and mouth and the female reproductive organs.

Use, internal: All fevers, constipation, jaundice and all liver disorders; vermifuge.

Dose: One cupful of the berries twice daily. Of a Standard Brew of the leaves, a cupful every morning; more frequently for jaundice and liver disorders.

Daisy

Bellis perennis. Compositae

Found in fields, woodlands, gardens. Leaves are oval, growing in rosettes on the ground; flowers are round, white, many petaled, sometimes pink-tipped. A very well known plant.The leaves are the medicinal part.

Use, internal: Treatment of skin disorders, wounds, bruises. To cleanse the nasal passages.

Use, external: Celebrated as a wound herb.

Dose: Some of the smallest leaves, when young, can be eaten raw in salad. Of a Standard Brew of the leaves (large or small) two tablespoons, three times daily.

Externally: Use the brew as a lotion for wounds. Or pound the leaves to a pulp and stir into melted cold cream or butter, and use as a salve. Add a pinch of cayenne pepper to every teaspoonful of the salve before it hardens to make it more effective.

For nasal treatment: Steam the leaves, roll into pellets, and push up the nostrils as far as possible. Keep there for as long as the insertion can be tolerated.

Plate 5. 1. Cowslip 2. Cranesbill 3. Dill (and seed)
4. Dock 5. Elder 6. Elacampane 7. Eyebright

Dandelion

Taraxacum officinalis. Compositae

Found on open land, in meadows and along waysides. Leaves long, toothed; flowers daisy form, bright yellow, heavily honey scented, later forming white, fluffy "clocks." The leaves and stem exude a white juice when pressed. This is one of the most esteemed plants of the herbalist, a favorite of the great Arabian herbalist Avicenna.

Use, internal: For all disorders of liver and bile (especially jaundice). A diet of the greens improves the enamel of the teeth. Helps in diabetes, obesity, over-sleepiness. It is blood cleansing, blood tonic, lymph cleansing.

Use, external: The white juice for application to warts, old sores, blisters, and hard pimples. American Indians use the split stem, for applying by rubbing, to bee stings.

Dose: A half-dozen or so of the leaves eaten daily. Being rather bitter, they should be mixed with some milder salad herb such as lettuce.

Dandelion coffee is made from the roots, which should be collected at the end of the year for this purpose. After careful cleaning, they are oven-dried at a low temperature for several hours, until they emit a pleasant roasted aroma. They are then ground to a fine powder. A little pure coffee may be mixed in with the dandelion root to improve the scent and flavor. Also, roasted chicory root can be added, a teaspoon to every twelve teaspoons of dandelion coffee.

Devil's bit scabious

Succisa pratensis. Dipsacaceae

Found in meadows and borders of woodland. Leaves are greyish, rather hairy; flowers small, daisy-shape, usually blue, sometimes white, prominent and with many stamens, strongly honey-scented. The root is peculiar in its blunt end, as if cut off abruptly or bitten. Legend says that this plant is so beneficial to mankind that the devil bit a piece off the root hoping to kill the plant. It is

especially good for female ailments, also a nervine, and of use in epilepsy and chorea. For the larger scabious see page 144.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of menstrual irregularities, uterine disorders, vaginitis. Also venereal disease. As a nerve tonic, and in treatment of hysteria, epilepsy, chorea, bad temper.

▣ Dose: A Standard Brew of the flowers. Take two teaspoons three times daily.

Dill

Anethum graveolens. Umbelliferae

Found in hedgerows. Has feathery, dark green, very aromatic leaves, and umbels of small, yellowish flowers, which produce the well-known half-moons of fragrant brown seeds.

Dill is so well known for "bringing up wind" that it used to be mentioned in Victorian songs! It is a generally beneficial herb. A favorite herb of the Russians.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of all digestive disorders, including windy colic and fermentation. Eases wind in babies. A mild tea of the seed, known as dill water, is given to babies before breast-feeding to improve their digestion. My children benefited much from dill water. Treatment of diarrhea, fevers. The leaves and seed added daily to the diet of nursing mothers increase the milk flow. A useful addition to olives, breads, biscuits. Very rich in minerals, dill improves the nerves, hair and fingernails.

▣ Dose: Add several sprays of leaves to the raw salad. Sprinkle the raw seeds — a small teaspoon — on vegetables, in porridge, and so forth.

Dill water. For general use: make a Standard Brew, steep and take several tablespoons before meals. For infants, merely place a teaspoonful of the seeds in a cup of boiling water (wineglass size) and steep; give tepid. Dill water is one of the best remedies to end fits of temper due to colic in infants. I sweeten it with honey. (*Publisher's Caution*: Honey may contain spores of a food poison which is harmless to adults but may be deadly to infants under one year of age.)

Dock, red

Rumex aquaticus. Polygonaceae

Found in abundance on wasteland and in fields. Leaves are lance-shaped and sparse on the stems. Flowers are pale green turning red-brown, in whorls. This is a cold herb, supremely blood-cooling. The leaves and root are used.

❁ Use, internal: For all heating of the blood, for skin impurities. Used in bygone days also in treatment of conditions similar to syphilis and leprosy.

❀ Use, external: The leaves are applied to all inflammations of the skin, all rashes, and for inflamed and swollen breasts. I have found an application of fresh dock leaves a wonderful help in cases of poison ivy rash.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the root or leaves, two tablespoonsful three times daily.

Externally: Select young leaves, bruise them slightly. Lay them on the area to be treated, and bandage in place. Renew every four hours or so, replacing the old leaves with fresh. Dock leaves pounded up and stirred into melted butter or cold cream make a cooling and healing save of much value. Dock leaves make good suppositories for treatment of piles. The leaves should be pulped and bound with a little melted soap (a plain olive oil soap) and then inserted in the anus three times daily.

Dom (*Christ-thorn, jujube*)

Zizyphus spina-christi. Rhamnaceae

This evergreen shrub sometimes achieves tree form. It is found in warm climates, in valleys and along coastal plains. Leaves are small, bright, dark green; flowers small, white; fragrance permeates the air where they are blossoming. Dom bears a small, round stone fruit which dries very well on the tree and can be stored for many months. Its flavor is a mixture of those of apple and date. It is a prized delicacy of the Bedouins. The thorns of this shrub are incurving and dig cruelly into the human flesh. Legend says that Christ's crown was made from dom branches, or it may have

been a closely related plant, *Paliurus spina-Christi*. Legend also says that the *Christi* name was given to this shrub because Christ loved the dom berries.

I learnt the use of dom berries when in Galilee, and I cultivate this shrub carefully on my land as a tonic food for my family — children and animals.

❁ Use, internal: To refresh and restore. To improve memory. A remedy for high blood pressure. The berries are exceptionally tonic. They revive failing appetite, relieve fatigue from great summer heat, and are laxative and vermifuge.

▣ Dose: A handful of the berries as desired, fresh or dry.

Echinacea (*purple coneflower*)

Echinacea purpurea. Compositae

This herb has attractive purple flowers. Fringed leaves of rough texture. A popular garden plant, also found wild in hedges and along pathways. Echinacea is known to be a favorite and sacred herb of the American Indians, and is much used for all ailments of women. It is also included on the short list of herbal cure-alls.

❁ Use, internal: Treats all internal aches and pains. Also useful in dysentery. Helpful in most ailments of women.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the flower heads, one tablespoon of flowers to two cups water, three teaspoons taken morning and evening, As this is a powerful herb, its use should be limited to several weeks per month. If any upset is felt from use of this herb, it should be discontinued immediately.

Elder

Sambucus nigra. Caprifoliaceae

A hedgerow shrub, found also in woodland and gardens. Large broken-form leaves, of strong scent. Flowers are in flat wheel-heads of creamy white color, waxy, very fragrant. Dark purple, edible, strong-tasting berries. This is one of the greatest of all herbs. It is sacred to the Gypsies who will not burn it as wood in

their fires: they declare that a tree which can help all the ailments of mankind and can restore sight to the blind is too precious to burn. A favorite herb of that first great doctor, Hippocrates. All parts of the plant are used, from root to berries and bark. Elder trees survive in the courts of the old synagogues of Safad (the ancient town of the mystics of Galilee, birthplace of the Kabala). A magic tree.

❁ Use, internal: *Elder root*, washed and soaked, yields a juice valuable in the treatment of lymphatic ailments and dropsy. Also kidney ailments. Can be used also as a brew; simmer the finely-shaved root for several minutes. *The inner bark of elder*, taken from old branches, is an esteemed remedy against epileptic fits.

▣ Dose: Steep a tablespoonful of the powdered inner bark layers in a small glass of wine. When the onset of fits is suspected, give a wineglass of the decoction every quarter-hour; give also a wineglassful every night during quiet periods.

❀ Use, external: *The leaves of elder*, as a strong Standard Brew, strengthened with the addition of geranium leaves and garlic cloves, are a potent remedy against itch, ringworm, scrofula (used internally and externally). Use the Standard Brew plain as a cure for eczema and baby rashes.

❁ Use, internal: *Elder flowers*, steeped raw in water, for colds, coughs and all pulmonary infections.

❀ Use, external: *Elder flowers* for all eye ailments. Has restored sight to the blind (when the *nerves* of the eyes were effected by shocks such as bomb blast). *Elder Blossom Complexion Lotion* is an old-fashioned but excellent treatment for the skin and hair. Also for burns, scalds, and erysipelas sores. Heat slowly, for thirty minutes or so, until the blossoms soften, a handful of elder blossoms in a half-pint of buttermilk or cheese whey. Do not heat above new-milk-warm. Remove from heat and steep for three hours. Reheat and add an ounce of honey. When cold, apply to face, neck and hands. Cools, softens and cleanses the skin.

❁ Use, internal: *Elder berries*, pounded up in honey, make a soothing and healing remedy for sore throats, coughs. An anemia remedy, prescribed in tonsillitis.

❀ Use, external: *Elder berries* can be applied to burns and scalds. Against malignant skin growths, they are used both internally and externally. They are a gentle laxative.

Elecampane, lesser

Inula viscosa or *I. helenium.* Compositae

Found in fields and on hill slopes. Leaves are bright green, rather sticky, of a very pungent scent due to glandular hairs which protect against grazing flocks. Flowers are bright yellow, starry, small.

❁ Use, internal: For all ailments of the chest and lungs, including pneumonia, bronchitis, asthma, hay fever. Will soothe coughs and is also a remedy for whooping cough.

❀ Use, external: Much favored by the Arabs, who use the leafy sprays in steam baths to cure stiffness of the body and rheumatic complaints. The herb in vapor (and as an internal medicine) warms and strengthens the lungs, and promotes expulsion of mucus from nose and throat. Used also as an insecticide, dried and powdered or as a strong brew. The Spanish peasants hang branches from ceiling hooks in their homes. The flies gather on the sticky plants which are thrust into sacks at nighttime, and the sacks are plunged into water, drowning the flies.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the whole herb, a tablespoon morning and night. In steam baths, place a quantity of the herb in a pot or kettle and simmer, so that the aromatic oils fill the room and surround the whole body. As a vapor inhalation: Steam the herb in a kettle, hold the face over the steam, covering head and spout of kettle with a cloth to retain the aromatic vapors.

Eyebright

Euphrasia officinalis. Scrophulariaceae

Found in meadows and by waysides. Leaves are tiny, in keeping with the whole miniature quality of this plant. Flowers also tiny, white, tinged with purple and having a yellow eye. The name of the plant comes from its remarkable power for the eyes: It has

restored sight to the blind where blindness resulted from neglected inflammation.

❁ Use, internal: For gastric ailments, and disorders of gall bladder and spleen. The plant is also an astringent and a nerve medicine.

❁ Use, external: As a lotion for treatment of all eye ailments, including conjunctivitis and ulcers. Also for earache and as a head pack for headache.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, a tablespoonful three times daily. *Strong Lotion of Eyebright*: Use a handful of the whole plant to three-quarters of a pint of water. Bathe eyes several times a day. Also soak cotton wads in the lotion and place over the eyes, keeping them on for a quarter of an hour or more, adding more lotion as they dry up.

Fennel

Foeniculum vulgare. Umbelliferae

Found on dry banks. It likes coastal regions. Leaves are feathery, very dark green, of pungent scent. Scent is of new-mown hay, from which the plant takes its name. Flowers are green-yellow, in umbels. The white hearts of fennel shoots are a prized vegetable, delicious to eat and very healthful. I learnt to use fennel in Algeria and Tunisia, and it is now one of the herbs which I value most.

❁ Use, internal: *Fennel leaves*, for treatment of all gastric ailments, also constipation, and obesity. Fevers, cramps, rheumatism, diabetes. Fennel foliage improves memory and is a general tonic for the brain. Hearts of the shoots are a digestive tonic, laxative, and fertility herb.

Fennel roots are not much used, but the Arabs consider them one of the finest of all laxatives. One root taken before meals, twice daily. Grate finely; mix in a tablespoon of bran for improved effect.

Fennel seed, crushed fine and made into a strong tea, speedily expels poison from the blood, therefore should be used after bites

from snakes, scorpions, dogs and other animals. Also reduces obesity. Will relieve jaundice.

❀ Use, external: *Fennel leaves*: As a poultice. As a lotion for all eye ailments.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, several tablespoons a day.

Fenugreek

Trigonella foenum-graecum. Leguminosae

Found in pastures. Likes sandy soils. Leaves are clover-form, very bright. Flowers are pea-shape, creamy, richly scented. The nourishing and medicinal value of this plant is in its seeds, which are very mineral rich and nourishing, and in chemical composition close to cod liver oil.

❀ Use, internal: A general tonic and stomach remedy. To increase the body weight. To strengthen the stomach, intestines, nerves. To give strength to pregnant women and increase breast milk. A good fever tea, soothing and cooling (with lemon juice and honey).

❀ Use, external: Fenugreek seed makes a useful poultice: The ground seed is made into a thick paste with hot milk. Spread on cotton cloth and apply directly upon swellings, abscesses, boils, carbuncles, corns, running sores. As a throat pack, applied hot to relieve soreness. As a throat gargle, use a hot brew.

▣ Dose: A strong tea of the seed (do not strain the tea, eat the seeds also).

Fern, male (*aspidium*)

Dryopteris filixmas. Dryopteridaceae

Found in woodlands and on riverbanks, in shady places. Its leaf shoots are very curled, resembling shepherds' crooks. The fronds are bright green and tall. Beautiful and quite common in places. Its distinguishing feature is its large, tufted and scaly root rhizome, which is the medicinal part. The taste of the root is sickly and bittersweet. It contains a green oil, also gum, resin, pectin,

tannic acid and albumin — altogether a remarkable rhizome.

❁ Use, internal: Through the ages this herb has held its own as a vermifuge. Pliny, Galen, Paracelsus and other great herbalists of ancient times praised it for this quality, especially for its powers to expel tapeworm, and to this present day it is in use as a tapeworm remedy. A general tonic.

▩ Dose: The male fern is prepared by slicing finely a piece of root about six inches in length, which is reduced to a pulp by covering with cold water and then boiling for half an hour. Sweeten the pulp with molasses (which is also a natural laxative) and eat all, together with the water in which it was boiled. A half hour later take a sloppy meal of soft, flaked oats, liquefied in a little salted, warmed, skimmed, raw milk. Take the same meal later, and nothing else to eat the whole night and day. Then inspect the stool to make sure that the whole worm, *including the head*, has been passed. For the worm can grow again from the head, speedily making new segments to replace those torn away in the treatment, as long as the head remains attached by hooks to the wall of the intestine. Male fern oil capsules, fitted to the age and build of the patient, can be given in hospitals.

Note: This remedy is given fasting; the patient should not have eaten food for twenty-four hours before the male fern dose and should take a strong laxative such as castor oil afterward.

Fern, Maidenhair

Adiantum capillus-veneris. Adiantaceae

Found in moist woodlands. Its leaves are frail, many to one stem, fan-shaped, shimmering and quivering in the wind, and always brittle. Apart from its fame as a hair tonic, being used internally and externally to improve the hair, it has other medicinal powers over heart and lungs.

❁ Use, internal: For chest ailments, cough, and as a heart tonic.

❀ Use, external: Treatment for the hair, loss of hair, scanty hair, brittle hair.

▣ Dose: Of the leaves made into a Standard Brew and sweetened, using honey or brown sugar, two teaspoonsful morning and night. *Externally*: An unsweetened Standard Brew, massaged well into the scalp every night. Add a few drops of oil of lavender (if possible) to this hair lotion.

Fern, royal

Osmunda regalis. Osmundaceae

Found in boggy places and damp meadowland. Fronds sometimes reach ten feet or more in height. A vivid green with forked veins. Considered the most noble of the ferns and named after a Saxon prince. Its name means both "peace" and "mouthwash!" The root is the medicinal part, and it is considered to be the shape of a buck's horn; this gives this beautiful fern the further name of "buckthorn brake." It contains much mucilage which it yields to boiling water. Royal fern jelly was once a popular delicacy for invalids, especially for those suffering from wasting diseases. It was given to the young princes of France.

❁ Use, internal: For treatment of coughs and lung ailments, dysentery. Roots of the common fern (bracken) are edible and can be ground and made into bread. The Gypsies make use of fern roots in this way (and they are also a favorite food item of badgers!).

❁ Use, external: The jelly, strengthened with oil of camphor, is useful for massage of the spine in stiff back, stiff neck, and other more serious ailments of the vertebrae.

▣ Dose: One or two roots, about six inches in quantity, infused in two cups of hot water. Bring to the boil, then remove from the heat and steep the fern root. A thick jelly results. This jelly should be sweetened with honey or brown sugar, and flavored with ginger, cinnamon and wine, to taste.

For external use, add two drops of oil of camphor to every tablespoon of the jelly. In France they also add brandy to the jelly to increase its powers of penetration into the spinal region.

Plate 6. 1. Fennel (and seed) 2. Feverfew 3. Fleabane
4. Fumitory 5. Garlic 6. Gentian

Feverfew

Chrysanthemum parthenium. Compositae

Found in waste-places. Leaves are feathery, and the flowers are white-yellow with pointed centers and daisy (chamomile) form. The plant is very aromatic and has quite a pleasant scent. It is famed as an herb for women.

❁ Use, internal: As a tonic and general remedy. Feverfew has power over the uterus and ovaries. For prevention of miscarriage. To help in difficult labor and retention of afterbirth. For female hysteria, female infertility.

❀ Use, external: The whole herb, crushed into a pulp, makes a good pain-soothing poultice. A useful suppository for treatment of piles.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, two tablespoonsful morning and night.

Flaxseed (Linseed)

Linum usitatissimum. Linaceae

Found wild in pastures, but mostly a cultivated crop. Leaves are small and pointed and pale green. The flowers are solitary and of a deep blue. The seed is the part used.

❁ Use, internal: Flaxseed is full of oil. It is very soothing, bland and tonic; a valuable nutritive food to build up weak bodies, enrich the blood, and strengthen the nerves. It heals as it feeds, soothing the throat and entire stomach and intestinal linings. Valuable in pregnancy. Treatment of coughs, sore throats, cold, croup. Treatment also for pneumonia, pleurisy, bronchitis (as a warm tea). *Flaxseed oil* is a valuable laxative for infants and invalids. Will relieve constipation and expel worms.

❀ Use, external: A superb poultice for abscesses, boils, swellings; as a cure for sprains, strained ligaments, bruises.

▣ Dose: Of the tea, made from one teaspoon of crushed seed to one cup of hot water (add honey and molasses to taste) — variable, to suit the individual. An average amount of linseed is half a cupful per adult once or twice daily. The seed should be

carefully prepared by soaking overnight and draining away the water which contains some irritating properties. The soaked seed can then be mixed raw with other cereals, or lightly cooked. Can also be added to vegetable soup in the same way as rice (after soaking). The soaked, ground seed is excellent added to bread and cakes, about two tablespoons of prepared flaxseed to one pound of flour. It improves the digestive qualities of the bread or cakes, and keeps them from speedy drying out.

Flaxseed (linseed) oil is taken in doses of two teaspoonfuls daily, one before the midday and one before the evening meal. As a laxative, take two teaspoonsful or more, fasting, in the early morning.

Flaxseed Poultice: Make a thick mash of the ground seed by slowly stirring in boiling water. The poultice can be further improved by addition of other medicinal herbs, as linseed softens them and releases their healing powers along with its own. Grated carrot, shredded parsley, daisy leaves, flowers of St. John's wort, hops, poppy heads, are all good added to linseed poultice, the mash then being bound over the affected area in the usual way.

Flaxseed Drink: Soak two ounces of flaxseed in enough water to cover. Steep overnight, then pour off the water and discard. Next, infuse the soaked linseed in two cups of water for several hours, standing it in a warm place and stirring occasionally. Then strain the seeds out of the liquid and drink. If used to soothe coughs and chest ailments, add four ounces of honey and a handful of raisins.

Fleabane

Erigeron canadensis. Compositae

Found on wasteland and cultivated land. Leaves lance-shaped and rather hairy. Flower heads are numerous, the center disks are whitish yellow, the ray petals are whitish tinted with pink. The bitter properties of this herb produce an effective wash for repelling fleas, hence its name. The whole plant is used. The grey down of the seeds can also be used.

❁ Use, internal: The plant is very astringent, and this gives it much value in herbal medicine. It is a cure for summer diarrhea in children, frequently succeeding when no other remedy proves helpful. Also for all intestinal troubles and for internal hemorrhages. Hemorrhage of the uterus (flooding from womb) was treated with astringent fleabane in former days when there were no facilities for investigating causes. (It cannot be too often emphasized that there is more to treating a hemorrhage than merely checking the blood loss. Nowadays there would also be treatment for shock and renewal, in some cases, of the blood supply. The interesting point here is the discovery of the styptic effect.) For dysentery, typhus. For all internal bleeding, scalding urine and most bladder troubles, including bed-wetting.

▣ Dose: Of a tea from a teapoonful of the cut herb to a cup of water, two teaspoonsful three times daily. To check severe diarrhea, dysentery, or hemorrhage: two teaspoons of a stronger brew of tea every two hours. To use as a warm enema: Steep a heaped teaspoonful of the herb in a quart of water just off the boil for half an hour.

Foxglove

Digitalis purpurea. Scrophulariaceae

Found in hedgerows and deep ditches, mostly in or near woodland. Leaves are oval and grey, flowers are in tall, attractive spikes and are rose-colored, freckled with white or brown, and somewhat thimble shaped.

❁ Use, internal: From the seed is produced the well-known drug *digitalin*, a popular drug used as a heart remedy in orthodox medicine. But as it has poisonous properties, I prefer the harmless remedies for the heart such as lily-of-the-valley or rosemary. Some herbalists maintain that if the *whole* plant is used, the danger of poisoning vanishes.

❁ Use, external: The whole plant is sedative, but the leaves are most frequently used. To ease pain, reduce inflammation and swellings of all kinds, including tumors, to soothe the twitchings

of chorea, to plug into the ears to soothe earache, to bind over the forehead for headache. A small handful of the leaves, heated to just below boiling point in two cups of water, makes a soothing eye lotion which is also a remedy for reducing freckles.

▣ Dose: Use internally only with supervision.

Fumitory

Fumaria officinalis. Papaveraceae

Found along waysides and near hedges. Leaves are fernlike in form and of a greyish color; flowers are pink-purple, red or yellow, with honey pouches, borne in spikes. The misty appearance of this plant has given it the name of "earth-smoke." It is a very esteemed herb and a Gypsy favorite.

❁ Use, internal: Its chief value is as a cure for all ailments of the liver, including jaundice, liver inflammation, enlarged liver. As a jaundice remedy, few herbs can excel fumitory. Makes arteries supple. Increases fertility and longevity. Also to allay biliousness, vomiting, and for general stomach disorders. As a digestive tonic. To cure yawning bouts and inclination to sleep overlong.

▣ Dose: Cut the flowers and leaves small, and infuse a heaped tablespoon in wine or apple cider vinegar. One teaspoon of fumitory to every wineglass of wine or vinegar. Infuse for at least twelve hours. Take a half wineglass morning and night.

Externally: Apply the infusion in wine or vinegar as a lotion.

Garlic

Allium sativum. Liliaceae

Found in damp pastures and woodlands, also widely cultivated. Its leaves are oval and with very strong onion odor. Flowers are white and starry, also strongly scented. The Gypsies worship this plant (moly) for its remarkable medicinal powers. The leaves and flowers are used. To cleanse garlic odor from the breath, chew parsley or mint or basil or thyme, after eating even a little garlic.

❁ Use, internal: Garlic is one of the few herbs found useful in all disorders of the human body. It is one of the most powerfully antiseptic herbs known to the herbalist. Acts powerfully on the mucous membranes in all parts of the body, and penetrates the bloodstream from the feet to the brain. It is further useful when the body is in normal health, as a general tonic and worm deterrent. Useful in fevers, and all disorders of the blood and lungs — including tuberculosis, for which it is a specific. Against whooping cough and asthma, high blood pressure, goiter and obesity, rheumatism, arthritis, sciatica. Vermifuge; expels all kinds of worms, including tapeworms. Protects against all infectious ailments, expels all toxic elements, kills harmful bacteria. Also protects the body and hair from parasites.

❁ Use, external: A good rub in arthritic and rheumatic pains, used hot. Garlic used both externally and internally is a most effective cure for threadworms — so difficult to eradicate. Several cloves are taken night and morning, fasting; at night a raw clove, smeared with oil, is inserted into the anus.

▣ Dose: Preferably take the garlic raw, in the form of a handful of leaves, or two or three cloves, eaten with the salad. Garlic burns the mouth slightly, but is quite palatable. Or it can be taken in dry, powdered, form, made into pills from three to six grains. Put garlic cloves (about four to one pound of flour) into bread when baking, also add to vegetables when cooking. In that way garlic supplies food value and its own oil, but for medicinal purposes use raw. The juice has use as a glue component.

Gentian

Gentiana campestris. Gentianaceae

Found in damp places, such as marshes, by lakesides. Leaves are small, simple, greyish. The flowers are its distinguishing feature, being usually of an intense and beautiful blue, four petalled. There is also a yellow-flowered variety, *Gentiana lutea*; the flowers are bigger. A Greek king, Gentius, who was also a great herbalist, gave this plant its name. The American Indians have long

worshipped gentian for its medicinal powers; it is their "blue blossom" remedy. The root is used. Gentian bitter is a tonic extraction from the roots, also used as a stomachic. Gentian violet is an antiseptic tincture. It is the quinine of the poor.

❁ Use, internal: As a general tonic and to purify the blood. It is a strong tonic, a good liver remedy. Will ease prolonged vomiting when all other treatments have failed. Neutralizes internal poisons. For indigestion, biliousness, jaundice, all vomiting and nausea, lack of appetite. For nervous disorders, including hysteria.

❀ Use, external: To neutralize all forms of poisons such as that in snake and scorpion and rabid dog bites (used internally and externally). Since there is more to the treatment of dangerous bites than dealing wtih the immediate symptoms, the patient should obtain skilled advice.

▣ Dose: One ounce of the finely shaved or freshly powdered root brewed in two cups of water as a Standard Brew. Sweeten with honey, and preferably add other pleasant-tasting herbs such as mint, basil, or lime blossom (linden), to reduce its very bitter taste. Two tablespoons thrice daily before meals. Famed *Gentian Tonic Wine* is two ounces of gentian root macerated (steeped) in one quart white wine.

Ginger

Zingiber officinale. Zingiberaceae

When growing wild, ginger favors shady places, hedgerows and verges of woodlands. Its leaves are greyish, consisting of many small leaflets. Its flowers are golden and plumey, pleasantly fragrant. In the places where I find ginger growing wild, such as the isles of the Azores, it has becoming a vegetation menace. Its knobby rhizome roots spread far and wide, and are difficult to uproot once they have established themselves.

Ginger is widely cultivated. The root is imported from China and West Africa, and is obtainable fresh, in pieces, or dried and ground.

Ginger! Ginger! It is one of my favorite of all herbal spices

and remedies. And indeed, present day it is bracketed along with garlic as being the greatest of the healing herbs. In addition to its healing properties, it is also in worldwide use as a flavoring; pungent, warming, and delicious. An entire book has been written on ginger. The special power of ginger as a flavoring spice and as a warming, soothing and healing medicine is embodied in an oily substance called gingerol, derived from ginger oil, and found mainly in the root rhizomes.

❁ Use, internal: As well as being a valued and popular condiment, ginger is highly medicinal. Its properties are stimulating, warming, aromatic, digestive. Ginger will produce sweating and its penetrative powers will quicken paralyzed limbs. A general tonic for nerves and digestive organs. Stimulates digestive juices, expels worms, cures colds, sore throats, diarrhea, nausea. Good for delayed menstruation and for exhaustion during or following childbirth. Medicinally the powdered root is given as a tea to cure indigestion, flatulence, stomach pains, stomach cramps, internal gas in stomach and intestines, also menstrual cramps. An important ingredient of senna laxative drink, to prevent the typical griping of senna. Also valuable as addition to other medicines, to lessen nausea.

Preserved ginger (sold in confectionery shops and health stores) is a famed remedy to cure indigestion, stomachache, and to help reduce craving for nicotine and narcotics of all kinds, including the addictive drugs. Candied ginger is such a popular remedy to combat seasickness that it is served in the dining rooms of transatlantic liners to help the passengers.

❀ Use, external: Bunches of the fragrant flowers are used as wedding bouquets, to give good cheer and health to the bride and groom. Ginger in powder form, applied in hot cloths, gives relief in toothache and headache.

▣ Dose: A piece of the root, about the size of a small hazelnut, may be chewed before meals. Or make ginger tea, from one teaspoonful of ginger (powdered) to one cup of hot water, sweetened with molasses and honey, and with a slice of lemon added. Taken this way, as a warm drink, it is helpful in cases of

delayed menstruation, and for childbirth pains. A level teaspoon of the powdered root can be made into balls with thick honey. As a sweet treat it can be taken as desired, being only beneficial.

Goldenrod

Solidago virgaurea. Compositae

Found in open places and by woodlands. Leaves are narrow, pointed, pale green. Flowers growing in tall rods of tiny, golden daisy-form flowerets, heavily powdered with pollen. This plant is cultivated in gardens for its glowing beauty, and the garden variety can be used as a medicine.

Use, internal: Remedy for most digestive ailments. Treatment of jaundice, kidney and bladder ailments. In fevers will promote sweating. A powerful tonic of pleasant taste.

Use, external: To staunch bleeding, cleanse infections. A famed wound herb. The Saracens preferred not to go into battle without this herb. The American Indians greatly favor it too. It was valued in the Middle Ages as the gangrene herb, but I for one have not discovered which necrotic condition was implied.

Dose: Of a Standard Brew, two tablespoons morning and night.

Goldenseal

Hydrastis canadensis. Ranunculaceae

Found in damp woodland and marshy areas. Leaves, borne in twos on the stems, are palm-shaped. Flowers are solitary, small, white or rose-shaded. The fruit is red and has the form of a raspberry, giving the plant its further name of ground raspberry. The root is the medicinal part. It is of rhizome type, internally has long fibers and is of an intense yellow, which yields a permanent dye. The fresh root is juicy, and this is used for dyeing. Turmeric root is another name for this plant. It is a favorite of the American Indians who considered it virtually a cure-all. A new herb to me, I learnt its use from American Seventh Day Adventists, and I share their view that it cures a wide variety of disorders.

Goldenseal is used as a substitute for quinine, and is most effective and less violent in action. The root is the only medicinal part of which I have knowledge. This is rather a costly herb.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of malaria and all fevers; there are reports of its successful ancient use in conditions closely resembling meningitis, and smallpox or scarlet fever or typhus. It is much used for erysipelas. An excellent eye remedy. Goldenseal has a powerful healing effect on all mucous surfaces, and is therefore of much value in healing stomach and intestinal ulcerations. Also for diabetes, nausea of pregnancy, including morning sickness. Used to soothe the nasal passages, bronchial tubes, bladder — internally and externally.

❀ Use, external: For sore tonsils, sore gums and mouth, sore eyes. Makes a good tooth tonic, brushed in lotion form upon the teeth and over the gums. For eczema, ringworm and all types of skin infections, goldenseal excels most herbs. Used in all infections of the genital organs.

▣ Dose: A quarter teaspoonful of the golden powder derived from the root, mixed with honey, eaten three times daily, before meals. Or add a small pinch of the powder to a half pound of flour when making bread (but not when you add garlic). It is slightly bitter but not too unpleasant.

Externally: Make *Goldenseal Lotion* by steeping half a teaspoonful of the powder in a large cup of water just off the boil. (This can also be taken as a tea, sweetened with honey, to allay morning sickness in pregnancy. A cupful should be taken fasting.) For wounds, merely sprinkle the dry powder directly on the wound, then cover with green leaves such as lettuce, geranium, or cabbage, and bind into place.

Ground Ivy

Glechoma hederacea. Labiatae

Found in woods and hedgerows. Leaves are small and grey, flowers small, pale blue, hooded. The whole plant is of a creeping growth.

❁ Use, internal: Digestive tonic and treatment of digestive

ailments. As a cough remedy, and for tuberculosis. For treatment of retention of afterbirth, and for all glandular infections. This small herb is a potent tonic and general stimulant; it acts powerfully upon the uterus.

❀ Use, external: As a wash, the ground ivy plant steeped in boiling water and applied for ulcers, abscesses, ear and nasal infections and spring rashes.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, a tablespoonful three times daily. For treatment of afterbirth pains, a cup of the brew every two hours. *Externally*: Apply the Standard Brew as a lotion. Chewed up in the human mouth, ground ivy was an old remedy of grooms and kennelmen for applying to the inflamed eyes of horses or dogs. Likewise, the Gypsies so use it for their children.

Groundsel

Senecio vulgaris. Compositae

Found on wasteland and in gardens. Leaves are greyish and slightly toothed. Flowers small, yellow, tubular shape, like tiny candles and possessing no ray petals. An important tonic herb, being extremely rich in minerals.

♁ Use, internal: The Victorians knew of the high mineral content of groundsel, but fed it regularly to their caged canaries instead of eating it themselves! This herb is quite palatable and I use it raw in salads. But — caution! What I (and the New Forest Gypsies, for example) do with groundsel is nowadays severely condemned by such authorities as the National Institute of Medical Herbalists who advise that groundsel and ragwort (*Senecio aureus*) should **not** be eaten, as they contain certain alkaloids which damage the liver. In consideration of the views of the National Institute of Medical Herbalists, I shall not recommend groundsel for internal use.

❀ Use, external: For all wounds, inflamed places, infected places, sore nipples, whitlows. For treatment of minor eye ailments, apply raw as an eye pack. It also strengthens weak eyes. Groundsel possesses strong drawing powers as well as antiseptic

properties far out of proportion to its small size. Mixed with ground ivy, it makes a poultice of high repute.

▣ Dose: Merely pulp up the raw herb and apply. An old-fashioned, but important, poultice is made by bruising fresh groundsel and making a mash with the addition of bread soaked in hot milk.

Gypsywort

Lycopus europaeus. Labiatae

The Latin name refers to the wolf's foot shape of the leaves. Whereas most of the mint-family plants have four stamens in the flowers, *Salvia* and *Lycopus* have only two. The white flowers are small, the plant prefers a light, rich soil.

❁ Use, internal: I have read in a French work that the tonic, stomachic and febrifugal properties of gypsywort are identical with those of *Eupatorium perfoliatum*, and that some of the properties of agrimony, especially the power to relieve obstruction of bile, may also be attributed to gypsywort. At present I am not able to vouch for these claims, and recommend that for both uses and dosage it be treated as a mint; see page 105.

Hawthorn

Crataegus laevigata. Rosaceae

Found in woods and hedges and on heaths and wasteland. Leaves are dark and narrow, with cut edges. The flowers are small, white or pinkish, with many stamens borne in clusters and are strongly scented. Supposed to bring fairies into houses. Unlucky if gathered before the first week of May. Fruits are small, red, hard with hard pips and known as haws. The wood of hawthorn is very hard and therefore an excellent tool wood. The hardness and strength of this shrub gives it its Grecian name for strength.

❁ Use, internal: The leafy *buds* are eaten as a tonic salad. The country name is "pepper and salt", as they have that very taste. *Hawthorn flowers* are also edible, sprinkled on fruit salads,

junkets and custards. *Hawthorn fruits* are edible and tonic, eaten raw (though rather astringent in the mouth). They make good conserves and fermented make a strong wine. They are also nervine and helpful in prevention of miscarriage.

❀ Use, external: A poultice of the pulped *leaves* or *fruits* has strong drawing powers. Country people for ages have used hawthorn for treatment of embedded thorns, splinters, and whitlows.

▣ Dose: As much as desired in salads. Against miscarriage take four to six fruits. The fruits can be dried and stored.

Heather

Erica species. Ericaceae

Found on peaty moorlands and hillsides. Leaves are minute, grey-green, tough; flowers, tiny, bell-form and very richly scented with honey. Indeed heathers scent the air for wide distances around where they grow in their pink-purple stretches. Heather yields a honey highly valued by those with the knowledge and the palate for distinguishing one honey from another honey.

❀ Use, internal: Good for heart and nerves. A tonic for invalids and for those who suffer from mental depression, general debility, impoverished nerves, insomnia, stomachache, lack of appetite. Fertility herb. Excellent mineral content. Scottish Highlanders make a cough remedy from a strong brew of heather flowers with plentiful heather honey added.

▣ Dose: As a tea, sweetened with honey. Infuse three or four flower sprigs in hot water.

Henbane

Hyoscyamus niger. Solanaceae

Found in waste places, especially around towns and villages; often found growing on old walls and amongst rubble and ruins. The leaves are attractively indented and the flowers are yellow with purplish brown markings. The offensive odor comes mainly from the sticky, hairy leaves. Both leaves and flowers yield an

alkaloid drug, hyoscyamine, which is poisonous if misused. On account of this danger, I prefer to use the herb externally only, but Arab friends have told me that they actually chew it to relieve severe stomach pains. (In pharmaceutical practice it is used for lessening the griping action of certain purgatives.) They use the herb a good deal in their homes, so possibly they have an acquired, or inherited, immunity to the worst effects of the drug.

Another name for henbane is "hog's bean;" this is, in fact, the ancient Greek name used by Dioscorides (*hyos kyamos*). According to Josephus Flavius, the headdress of the High Priest of the Jews was modeled after this plant, with its funnel-shaped corollas.

☸ Use, internal: Spasms of asthma, croup, whooping cough, chronic cough. As a hypnotic to calm nervous frenzy, fits of rage, uncontrolled weeping. It was used as a general sedative in former times, long before the discovery of anesthesia. Henbane was favored as a narcotic in ancient times. Many herbalists prefer henbane to opium, as it is less habit-forming and also does not cause constipation through the drugging of the intestinal nerves. It is given when opium cannot be tolerated by severely ill patients. For internal use the seeds are used, as they are almost nonpoisonous. Pigs eat the seeds freely.

❀ Use, external: The leaves to soothe inflamed wounds and glandular swellings (including mumps), to apply to throbbing pulses in wrist and head, to ease toothache.

▣ Dose: Of the seeds only, six to eight seeds morning and night. For earache: of a Standard Brew of the leaves, drop a teaspoonful (warm) into both ears — even if only one ear is aching. For toothache, the leaves are chewed and then spat out.

Henna

Lawsonia species. Lythraceae

Found on hillsides and plains, in shrub form in Eastern lands. Also cultivated with artificial heat. Leaves are narrow, small, grey-green, and profuse. Flowers also profuse, small, creamy white in *L. alba*, in rose-pink panicles in *L. inermis*. Flowers very fragrant

and they give small, blue-black, single berries. The whole shrub, skin of roots, bark of trunk and branches, dried leaves and fresh berries, yield henna, the *alcanna* of the Arabs. This herb is extremely penetrative and therefore a very effective and very popular dye. Its one fault as a hair dye is its astringency and therefore after applications of henna, oil should be rubbed into the hair (preferably a bland oil such as corn or sunflower).

❀ Use, external: Hair dye. Henna not only tints the hair auburn or black as desired, it is also a hair and scalp tonic. Also a skin dye: Arabs henna the palms of their hands and the soles of their feet; they find this cooling as well as beautiful. As a pack applied upon the head and over the forehead, in headaches and fevers. Applied like clay over feet and ankles, henna will reduce swelling and soothe aching, burning feet. As with many astringent herbs, henna is also most cooling, and therefore is used to allay high fevers and in jaundice cases. To draw impurities from the body: apply to the navel. It is also a useful application to insect bites.

▣ Dose: To make a henna pack to dye the hair or soothe the head, take two cupfuls of henna powder (red or black), stir slowly into this powder one cupful of tepid water — more or less — to make a paste which will not drip off the scalp and hair. Henna pack is further improved by adding one teaspoon of pure vinegar and a half-teaspoon of goldenseal root in powder form. Heat the mixture slowly, using a double boiler. Keep well stirred, and when this is near boiling keep on the flame for a few minutes. Allow to stand and steep for one hour. Then reheat to blood-heat (as a hair dye) and massage well into the head and hair. Tie a scarf over the head to cover the hair while the henna is working, and to prevent the mixture falling. Leave the henna pack on the hair for seven hours or more, keeping the head covered all the time. Then rinse off, and later apply a little oil to the scalp and hair. For headaches, other applications, use the henna cold.

Plate 7. 1. Ground Ivy 2. Hawthorn 3. Heather
4. Henbane 5. Herb Robert 6. Honeysuckle

Herb robert

Geranium robertianum. Geraniaceae

Found on wasteland, in hedgerows and on the outskirts of woods. Greyish in color, geranium-form leaves, flowers small, pink, noticeably scented. This herb is also called stinking crane's-bill, although it has a rather pleasant, geraniumlike aromatic scent. Sometimes the entire plant turns red in the autumn.

❁ Use, internal: Soothing and antiseptic. A diabetes aid. Treatment of all forms of hemorrhage, kidney and bladder ailments, tuberculosis, and soothing for some forms of cancer.

❁ Use, external: Like all the geraniums, this is a good wound herb, with healing and drawing properties. As a ringworm remedy, and as a wash to remove lice and their eggs.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, a half-cup morning and night. *Externally*: Make an especially strong brew, doubling the quantity of herb to the water used, and apply as a lotion. For wounds, apply the leaves, fresh, bruised, and bound into place.

Hollyhock

Alcea rosea. Malvaceae

Found wild on wasteland and rocky slopes. Also widely cultivated in gardens. Leaves are round, large, with hairy undersides of greyish color. Flowers are large, borne on tall spikes, and have the typical mallow-type square petals. The wild variety usually has rose-colored flowers.

❁ Use, internal: This plant possesses valuable soothing properties. To soothe the digestive tract. To expel worms. Female troubles, inflammation of uterus, uterine tumors, vaginitis. The leaves, heated in wine, are given to avert threatened miscarriage. The leaves, lightly boiled, provide a worm remedy suitable for children, one much used by Bedouin Arabs, wild hollyhock being abundant in many areas where the Bedouins live.

❁ Use, external: To soothe inflamed flesh, cool the burning of wounds.

▣ Dose: A handful of leaves to one cup of water or wine. Flavor with a pinch of ginger and cinnamon. Take two tablespoons four times daily.

Externally: Apply a lotion made from boiling the leaves in water, or apply young leaves, using the upper sides, not the rough undersides, directly on the area to be treated. Or make a poultice of the pulped leaves added to flaxseed mash.

Holy thistle

Cnicus benedictus (*Carduus benedicta*). Compositae

Known also as "blessed thistle" and "Our Lady's milk thistle." Found on wasteland and by waysides. Leaves are spiky and mottled, of bitter taste. Flowers are purple, typically of globose thistle form. This plant gained the name of holy or blessed thistle on account of its beneficial effects upon all who gather and use it, and for its general usefulness. All of the plant is edible; the root is used as a vegetable, the leaves as a green salad, and the heads as artichokes.

❁ Use, internal: It clears the mind of depression and ill humor, and was formerly given to the insane. Good for all organs of the body, especially the heart and brain. To purify the blood, cleanse the stomach, liver and kidneys, for heart ailments and as a heart tonic. Treatment of mental depression, suicidal feelings, loss of memory. Beneficial in ailments of women, increases the flow of breast milk and will regulate faulty menstruation.

▣ Dose: A salad of a half-handful of the young leaves, trimmed of prickles and their coarse outer cover, or of the young hearts of the leaves, or the young stems, eaten once daily. Or, of a Standard Brew of the fresh or dried leaves, a small cupful with honey, morning and night. Eat also the cooked stems and fruits.

Honeysuckle

Lonicera periclymenum. Caprifoliaceae

The "luscious woodbine" found twining in woodlands and hedgerows. Leaves, oval, shiny, grayish. Flowers spurred, yellow-

cream to pale pink-purple, highly fragrant. The whole plant is medicinal: flowers, leaves, and bark.

❁ Use, internal: Good for the heart, skin ailments, rheumatic ailments. All heart troubles and as a heart tonic. Against sore throat, cough, asthma, skin disorders, rheumatism, arthritis and general stiffness of the joints. Swollen glands, dropsy — use the *honeysuckle bark* remedially.

❀ Use, external: Crushed *honeysuckle leaves* applied to wounds, sores, ulcers, will promote healing and allay heat.

▣ Dose: A small handful of *honeysuckle flowers*, eaten raw or made into a tea, taken in the early morning. Or a Standard Brew: one teaspoonful of flaked bark to one cup of water. A *French Gypsy Asthma Remedy*: a handful of the flowers, well crushed, mixed with sufficient honey and molasses (equal parts) to bind the flowers. Eat a tablespoon of the confection morning and night.

Hops

Humulus lupulus. Cannabaceae

Found growing on rich, moist land. A hedgerow climber, also widely cultivated. Leaves are vine-form, flowers are of peculiar form, green-yellow, fragrant. The fruit, called strobiles, are pale green, covered with loose scales and are of cone-form. They possess a yellow, resinous dust that contains *lupulin*, which gives this herb most of its medicinal virtues. Hops are know for their use in breweries, but they also are one of the best medicinal plants known to the herbalist. A favorite plant of the Gypsies everywhere. The whole plant is useful.

❁ Use, internal: General tonic. Excellent nervine, sleep inducer, cure for uncontrolled sexual desires and a quarrelsome nature; also for earache, toothache, neuralgia. Will restore poor appetite due to general debility, and its long-term use could prevent anemia. Worm remover. It is also pain reducing and hypnotic. It increases breast milk and thereby soothes irritable infants.

❀ Use, external: For aches, wounds, skin rashes.

Hops Poultices are made from crushed hops worked into a

paste with bran, and applied cold, to cure inflammations, swellings, sores, boils, tumors and cysts. A rub for congested lungs or pains in the chest is made from a handful of hops steeped in one cup of vinegar or ale, reheated and used hot.

Hops Pillows were once in popular use to induce sleep, calm the nerves, prevent nightmares. These are pillows made of muslin, and stuffed with hops. They would be equally beneficial if used nowadays, and would be improved by adding several handfuls of dried lavender flowers to every pillow.

▣ Dose: If possible, cut six to eight hops flowers small and eat them raw, morning and night; some honey can be added. Or make a tea from a heaped tablespoonful of hops placed in one cup of cold water and simmered for two to three minutes. Steep well and drink a small cupful morning and night. The shoots of hops, blanched and eaten young, are sometimes likened to asparagus.

Horehound, White

Marrubium vulgare. Labiatae

Found in dry, waste places preferring poor soil. Leaves are grey-green, rough, slightly woolly, and have a scent of vines. The flowers are small, white, pungent of scent, and encircle the stems in whorls. This is a bitter aromatic herb. Should be gathered when young, before flowering.

❁ Use, internal: General tonic. A well-known throat and lung remedy.Treatment of sore throat, coughs, colds, hoarseness, asthma, tuberculosis, all lung disorders. To reduce fevers, expel worms. Horehound contains a powerful substance, *marrubium*, which promotes perspiration and the flow of urine, and is also laxative and vermifuge.

❀ Use, external: For earache. Drop a half-teaspoon of the Standard Brew into the ears several times daily and then massage the base of the ear.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, two tablespoons, sweetened with honey, twice daily.

Horehound Syrup: Heat together one cupful brown sugar, two

tablespoons honey, the juice from half a lemon (about one teaspoonful of juice), one teaspoonful oil such as sunflower or corn. When the syrup has thickened, stir in a strong Standard Brew made of a large handful of horehound leaves steeped in water overnight.

Horehound Candy: Long known as a soothing syrup and tonic sweet, horehound candy used to be on sale in grocers' shops in Victorian times, and was a favorite with children: a healthful sweet. Into two pounds of brown or lump white sugar (the latter is most typical for horehound candy, though less healthful), stir four tablespoons of horehound infusion (the strained liquid obtained from boiling a handful of the dried herb in one and a half cups of water). Mix in two teaspoons of thick honey. Boil all together for a half-hour, or until a portion taken out hardens when dropped into cold water. Then pour onto a cold marble slab (preferably) or into shallow tin molds dusted with icing sugar.

Horseradish

Cochlearia armoracia. Cruciferae

Found in waste places and cultivated in gardens. Leaves long, coarse, rough, of biting taste, flowers small, whitish and cross-form. The rootstock is the medicinal part, and is long, with stringy end, white or pink in color. It has a hot, biting taste.

Use, internal: Its "hot" property makes it a valued remedy for expelling worms, destroying harmful bacteria, and stimulating the appetite. A good remedy for urinary troubles. To reduce dropsy and dissolve internal tumors.

Use, external: As a raw poultice, applied to wounds, old sores, swellings and tumors.

Dose: One or two roots daily, taken raw and finely grated. Divide into teaspoon-amounts and take before meals. Eat the horseradish with bread if its hot pungency cannot be tolerated on the tongue.

Horsetail

Equisetum arvense. Equisetaceae

Found on wasteland and along ditches and roadsides. This plant is of peculiar formation, resembling a horse's tail. The stems are hollow-jointed and the leaves reduced to a mere scale at the points. No flowers are produced, but brown spores are borne on the fertile stems. The high silica content of this plant gives it a hard and quite sharp texture, and peasant people and Gypsies put it to use as a pan scourer. It was formerly especially used to scour dairy pails and implements. The plant is highly medicinal, with powerful antiseptic properties, and is a famed vulnerary.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of stomach and intestinal ulcers, inflammation of the uterus, vagina and bladder (also used externally as a douche). To cure internal wounds of bowels, reduce enlarged anal glands (internal and external treatments). For dysentery, obesity, dropsy. To dissolve stone in bladder (a strong brew). To strengthen hair, fingernails, enamel of teeth.

❀ Use, external: For nose-bleeds, laryngitis, ear pains, toothache, all forms of wounds.

▣ Dose: This is a potent herb. Of a Standard Brew, made from a half-handful of the whole plant to three cups of water, two teaspoonfuls, morning and night.

Externally: Pulp up the herb, dissolve well in warm vinegar, a handful of herb to two cups of vinegar. For treatment of wounds, dilute the vinegar brew with two parts of raw milk. The whole plant, made into a strong brew, is an effective spray against mildew on roses and vines.

Hound's tongue

Cynoglossum officinale. Boraginaceae

Found on dry banksides and uncultivated land. Leaves are of rough texture and tongue-shaped, thus giving this plant its common English name; they are greyish in color. Flowers are blue shading to pink, hooded and with funnels. At the base of the

funnel is stored nectar; country children like to suck the flowers to take this nectar. I use the flowers, fresh or dried, in herbal teas for table use. The root is the medicinal part, both fresh and dried, but the leaves are also helpful. This is chiefly a poultice herb (and a very effective one), but also has value in treatment of the respiratory system.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of coughs, excess mucus in nasal passages and throat, congestion and bleeding of lungs, bronchitis.

❀ Use, external: A poultice for application to bruises, abrasions, gravel rash, goiter, tumors, burns and scalds.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, made of the leaves or the shaved root, one tablespoonful boiled in one cup of water; allowed to stand and brew for several hours, then strained, a tablespoon three times daily before meals. *Externally*, use the shaved root or bruised leaves applied direct as a poultice, or apply a cloth soaked in a brew from the root shavings: apply cold.

Houseleek

Sempervivum tectorum. Crassulaceae

Found on old rubble, in crevices on rooftops and walls. Its succulent nature enables it to survive in such arid places. Its leaves are grey-green, in rosettes, and distinguished by their succulence. Flowers are small, rose-colored, star form, and are borne in spikes. Its use is mostly external for treatment of skin ailments, this being an astringent and very cooling herb. Internally as a vermifuge. The leaves contain lime.

❀ Use, external: Treatment of itching skin, all rashes, inflammations, erysipelas, burns, warts, stings.

▣ Dose: For worms. Make pea size pills of the pulped plant rolled in flour and bound with a little honey. Take two pills of the plant, fasting, morning and night. *Externally*: The pulped plant applied direct to the affected area. For warts, slice leaves in two and apply the moist inner surface to the warts.

Hydrangea

Hydrangea aborescens. Hydrangeacea

Found in woodlands and along banks of streams, also cultivated as a garden plant. Leaves are ovate, dark green, cut edges, large. Flowers are showy, and borne in large corymbs, white, blue or pink-shaded. The bark of the stems peels very freely. This was a favorite of those great herbalists, the Cherokee Indians.

❁ Use, internal: A mild and soothing herb, effective in rheumatic troubles and glandular disorders. Also in urinary ailments; rheumatism, including its chronic forms, joint stiffness and paralysis; bladder and kidney disorders, including stone, inflammation, backache from kidney trouble. Treatment of dropsy and all lymphatic swellings.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew from the leaves, two teaspoonfuls, morning and night.

Hyssop

Hyssopus officinalis. Labiatae

Found in dry, hilly places. The leaves are long and lance-shaped, and highly aromatic. Flowers are pale blue and hooded, also aromatic, mint-like. This important herb was praised by David in the Bible: "Purge me with hyssop." Some say that the biblical hyssop was more likely to be the caper plant. The leaves contain a peculiar yellow oil and sulphur.

❁ Use, internal: Hyssop is notably successful in relieving catarrh. The whole herb is a great body cleanser, also a fever and nerve herb. It is a mild vermifuge and also valued for the eyes. Regulates the blood. For all complaints of throat and lungs, including tuberculosis. To expel mucus from all parts of the body. Treatment for asthma, coughs, sore throats, high and low blood-pressure, nervous disorders, including fits and epilepsy.

❀ Use, external: The leaves applied to bruises will allay pain and lessen discoloration. May be used as an application for bites

and stings of insects and medusae (jelly fish), and for killing body vermin. As a remedial lotion for eye and ear ailments. As a gargle.

Externally: As a lotion, use the Standard Brew. For skin vermin, make a decoction by steeping hyssop leaves, finely cut, in pale ale. Use the same mixture for application to stings and bites.

▣ Dose: A few leaves may be eaten raw in salad. Of a Standard Brew, two tablespoons before meals, sweetened with honey.

Hyssop Gargle: Make a Standard Brew of equal parts of sage leaves and hyssop herb.

Iceland moss

Cetraria islandica. Parmeliaceae

Found in damp places. Grows from two to four inches high and is generally brown or grey in color. It is dry and cartilaginous, drying up to an ashlike substance of grey-white shade. When put into water it swells up rapidly, and when gently boiled and cooled it becomes a fine jelly. This plant is remarkably life-giving and nutritious and will sustain life where little else grows. It is a favorite with reindeer.

❁ Use, internal: Much used in treatment of tuberculosis, which is rather prevalent in Iceland. Used also to nourish weak children and aged people. To soothe the intestinal tract in dysentery and similar ailments. To give strength to infants; for all invalids. Treatment of malnutrition and rickets, chronic catarrh and coughs, also bronchitis. Dysentery and diarrhea. The special tonic virtues are due to a substance called *cetarin*, which is slightly bitter in taste. If it is removed, the moss becomes merely of nutritional value.

▣ Dose: One teaspoonful Icelandic moss stirred into a cup of water just off the boil. Sweetened with honey or molasses. Or a half-cup of water can be used and then a further half-cup of milk added: sweeten with honey, maple sugar, molasses. Also add a little cinnamon, nutmeg, and a pinch of powdered cloves to make a nutritious milk jelly.

Plate 8. 1. Horehound 2. Horsetail 3. Hound's Tongue
4. Knapweed 5. Lady's Mantle 6. Larkspur

Iris

Hermodactylus tuberosus. Iridaceae

Found in damp places and coastal regions. Formerly much cultivated in herb gardens for its medicinal properties. Leaves are stalkless, reed-form, flowers pale blue, color streaked (the very name "Iris" means rainbow), and sweetly scented. The rhizome root is the medicinal part. *Iris florentina* provides the treasured orris root of herbalists and perfume makers. This root yields the sweetly scented orris powder (featured on page 183-184).

❁ Use, internal: A mild general tonic for the whole body, but especially beneficial to the liver. It is mildly laxative. A gentle aperient. Treatment of all liver ailments, especially jaundice.

▣ Dose: Of one rhizome about six inches in length, cut up into small transverse sections and steep in wine for twenty-four hours, a tablespoon three times daily before meals.

Ivy

Hedera helix. Araliaceae

Found as a climber in woodlands, on old walls, cultivated as a house climber. Leaves are heart-shaped. Flowers are small, honey-colored, very fragrant, sticky. The flowers are beloved by bees and all insects. The dark colored berries are sought by birds. Both leaves and berries are used.

❁ Use, internal: A famed fever herb, and a glandular regulator. Used also to expel retained afterbirth. To calm the blood in all fevers. To reduce dropsical conditions of the body and all enlarged glands, and for mumps. For glandular treatments, ivy is used internally and externally.

❀ Use, external: For inflamed joints, swollen face caused by toothache. Needless to add, it does not cure dental decay.

▣ Dose: This is a potent herb and should be used in small quantities. Of a Standard Brew, using six medium-size leaves to one cup of water, two tablespoons, before meals. For use in removal of retained afterbirth, two tablespoons every two hours.

Externally: Make a pulp from the leaves or leaves and berries, and apply to the affected area. For stiff joints, make *Ivy Oil* by steeping the plant in salad oil (see page 7-8); massage into the joints. Use this oil also for swollen glands and aching face.

Kale

Brassica oleracea. Cruciferae

Garden kale (including marrow-stemmed and thousand-headed varieties) is of the cabbage family. The related *Crambe maritima* originally grew wild along the shores of Britain, western Europe and the Black Sea; under cultivation its blanched sprouts have become a vegetable delicacy. Also related is the sea radish: *Raphanus maritimus* (Cruciferae), quite a rare species with pungent roots of excellent texture. *Crambe maritima* is still found along seashores in sandy and stony places, and cultivated in Greek gardens. The leaves are rounded and glaucous, flowers are small and white, root is thick and fleshy. A Greek favorite.

Use, internal: A fine general tonic for blood and nerves. For weak blood, unclean blood, sciatica, arthritis, gout, constipation and obesity, also kidney and bladder disorders. Exceptionally mineral-rich with much calcium, chlorine, phosphorus, potassium, and sulphur. A remedy for all rheumatic conditions.To improve eyesight and memory. Excellent for the teeth, checks decay of teeth and relieves pyorrhea.

Dose: Eat raw as a salad herb, if possible, a few plants daily. Also grind, steep in warm water, flavor with salt and a little red pepper, and drink a cupful of the liquid before meals.

Knapweed

Centaurea nigra. Compositae

Found in fields and along waysides. Leaves are narrow, small, grayish. Flowers are thistle-form, large and purple and very honey-scented. One of several plants popularly known as "bachelor's buttons." The flowers are used.

♁ Use, internal: A fine general tonic. Treatment of glandular disorders. To check hemorrhages.To restore failing appetite. Treatment of dysentery, gastritis, sour stomach, bad breath. To reduce swollen glands (used internally and externally).

❀ Use, external: As an application for bleeding from nose and mouth, and for anal and vaginal hemorrhages. Here again we must be aware of the danger of concentrating on symptoms rather than causes. As mentioned elsewhere, we must bear in mind that in old times the use of certain herbs was observed to bring about certain effects. Our task today is to discover which properties produce these effects and to deduce from there the modern applications. The herb can also be taken internally when the bleeding is severe. Treatment of wounds and running sores.

▣ Dose: Eat some of the flowers, especially young ones and buds, cut up in the salad. These are free of prickles and quite edible. Of a Standard Brew of the flowers, two tablespoons, three times daily. *Externally*: Apply the brew as a cold pack or use as a douche.

LADY'S MANTLE

Alchemilla vulgaris. Rosaceae

Found in woodland and shady moist places. Its leaves are cloak-like and pleated, giving this plant its name (it is also a specific for women's ailments). Flowers are numerous, tiny and golden. The true name of this plant is Arabic: *alkemelych*, from the alchemists who were the ancestors of the chemists. Its name shows the high esteem in which the Arabs held — and still hold — this herb.

♁ Use, internal: It is a general tonic for women and remedy for the female organs of generation. If taken from one period to another by barren women it will restore normal menstruation and help them to conceive — so the Arabs claim. Also a heart tonic. Treatment of heart ailments. To tone up sluggish blood and fortify weak arteries. Treatment of diabetes and dropsy.

▣ Dose: Some sprigs of the herb eaten raw in salad, twice daily. Of a Standard Brew, a small cupful morning and night.

Larkspur

Delphinium consolida. Ranunculaceae

Found on riverbanks and sandy places. Leaves are dark green and broken. Flowers are intense blue, sometimes greyish. This charming plant is named after the word dolphin, *delphinus*, because of the shape of the upper sepal, considered to resemble that winged animal of the sea. The roots and the seeds are the parts used in herbal medicine. The wild larkspur being an annual, it is not too destructive to take some of the roots after seed dispersal of the plants.

❀ Use, external: The whole plant, including the flowers, contains an acid substance which will destroy insect pests. Larkspur was the official remedy for destruction of body lice during the American Civil War. Treatment against all skin and hair vermin. Although this plant has also proved to be a remedy for worms, asthma (the dry, powdered, plant used as a snuff), and dropsy if taken internally, I would advise its external use only on account of its potent acid content.

Laurel

Laurus nobilis. Lauraceae

Found wild in Asia Minor, and as a garden shrub worldwide. Leaves are oval and shiny, frequently gold-speckled. Its flowers are rounded and greenish. Berries dark. Laurel leaves are popular in cooking and preserving, enjoyed for their pleasant, bland flavor. Greek peasants use laurel as a chosen flavoring for lentils, soups, olives and cheeses.

❁ Use, internal: As a tonic for all the organs of digestion. To promote appetite. The leaves are astringent and therefore of value in dropsical conditions, obesity, diabetes, kidney ailments.

❀ Use, external: The leaves are applied to burns and bruises, also soft tumors and all swellings. As a hair tonic.

▣ Dose: Several leaves taken daily. Soften by holding over hot water.

Externally: Pulp leaves and also water-soften them. Or make a salve with lanolin.

Laurel Hair Tonic: Heat a handful each of laurel leaves and rosemary in a quart of water for half an hour. Do not strain. Rub into hair. Fragrant, strengthening and refreshing.

Lavender

Lavandula spica and *Lavandula vera*. Labiatae

There are many forms of lavender and all are medicinal and highly valued by the herbalist. Found on dry, sandy land or rocky places. It is much cultivated in gardens, and used in perfumery. Likes coastal areas and mountainsides. Leaves are thin, narrow, long, greyish; the small flowers are in spikes of blue-purple, they are lipped and very fragrant both when fresh and when dried. As with most strongly scented flowers — especially blue ones — lavender is highly nervine. Esteemed as a tea and for flavoring. Leaves and flowers are used.

Use, internal: As a nerve tonic, treatment of fainting, headache, sunstroke, vomiting, hysteria, paralysis, general weakness of limbs, swelling of limbs. As an asthma inhalation and tea. An excellent face lotion infused in whey.

Use, external: To keep moths from clothing and from dried fruits. As a mouthwash for those with loose teeth, bad breath.

Dose: A few of the flower spikes can be eaten raw in salad. Of a Standard Brew of the flowers, a small cupful morning and night. The flowers can be added to other teas with advantage.

Externally: To deter moths, place the flower spikes and some leaves freely amongst the garments. Or make lavender bags, using open-weave muslin, and fill the bags with the dried flowerets, gathered before midday.

Lemon

Citrus limon. Rutaceae

Found wild in the East; also widely cultivated in sunny climates. Its valued yellow fruits are sold in all parts of the world and are too well known to require description. Leaves are oval, shiny, fragrant. Flowers are rose-form, white, waxy and very fragrant. The lemon tree's leaves and fruit possess extraordinary healing and general medicinal powers.

Use, internal: *Lemon fruits* are good for almost every ailment. In fever cases there is nothing better to give the patient than diluted lemon juice lightly sweetened with honey. I made this simple remedy the basis of many of my veterinary cures, and it was always very successful. To cleanse the blood, to cool the blood, to expel mucus from all parts of the body. Treatment of all dysentery, diarrhea, worm infestation, diabetes, erysipelas. For all skin ailments, pulmonary ailments, jaundice. *Lemon leaves* are used as the fruit but they are much milder and slower in action. *Lemon seeds*, crushed, are a worm remedy for children (two teaspoons, on rising, for two weeks).

Use, external: The raw juice to heal sores, certain abscesses, erysipelas, ringworm. The diluted juice (one part lemon to three parts water) as a lotion for eczema, scalds, burns. The very diluted juice (one part lemon to five parts water), as a lotion for weak or inflamed eyes and for ear ailments.

Dose: In general, half a medium-sized lemon to a cup of water, sweetened with one teaspoon of honey. This cleansing drink is the best means of breaking the night's fast every morning. Similar drink in fever treatments, but using less honey. Those who must, in hot climates, see to the storing of cold water for the day, should add lemon leaves to the water to keep it fresh and give it a pleasant flavor. A few flowers can also be added.

Lemon Remedy for Colds and Fevers. Wash a medium-size juicy lemon. Cut it through with six cuts, but do not remove the skin. Place the lemon, point downwards, in a shallow dish of pure, liquid honey in which two cloves are standing, and soak

overnight. Then squeeze the lemon dry (into the honey) and take the lemon-honey in teaspoonful doses as required. The natural citric acid thus extracted from the soaked peel is an excellent cure for all kinds of fevers and colds. Mix with a wineglass of warm water if desired.

LILY OF THE VALLEY

Convallaria majalis. Liliaceae

Found wild in woodlands and damp, shady places. Leaves are oval and grow low from the root; the plant forms a thick mat of underground stems; flowers are waxy white bells, hanging from spikes. It is said to be mildly narcotic. The whole plant is medicinal. The flowers are the most powerful part.

Use, internal: Heart tonic and remedy, very calming, as well as healing; not habit-forming. Treatment of nervous ailments, including epilepsy, fits, hysteria; soothes nervous irritability. Cures dizziness. Clears the mind and strengthens the memory. Reduces high blood pressure, reduces risk of apoplexy. For dropsy and all lymph irregularities. Treatment of infestation by thread- and roundworms; inflamed bowels. The roots also share most of the properties of the flowers in a milder form and are gently aperient. A powerful herb, use sparingly.

Use, external: The leaves applied to cool all forms of inflammation. From the flowers the French distill their *eau d'or.*

Dose: Of a Standard Brew from two handfuls of the flower spikes (or two teaspoonfuls of the shaved root) in three cups of water, a small wineglassful, morning and night.

LINSEED. *See FLAXSEED*

LICORICE

Glycyrrhiza glabra. Leguminosae

Found wild in many parts of southern Europe on dry stony land. Spain is the principal exporter of stick licorice. Also largely culti-

vated as a medicinal and nutritive plant. Leaves are pale green, of many leaflets from a central stalk. Flowers are pale blue and pea-form. Roots are yellow and woody. This herb was much favored by the great Arabian and medieval herbalists. The root is the part used. The whole root is used, or the extracted solidified juice which is from crushed, boiled roots obtainable in black sticks. Many sweetmeats are made from licorice, and they are one of the best confections for satisfying children's desires for such treats.

Use, internal: Treatment of cough, inflamed throat and for all parts of the pectoral region: pneumonia, pleurisy, tuberculosis. To soothe the stomach and provide a mild laxative for infants and others. It possesses nutritive properties, and is known to contain female hormones. Treatment of female infertility, delayed and irregular menstruation. For worms in infants and for chronic constipation. To allay stomach and intestinal cramps.

Use, external: The pulped leaves are softened in hot water and applied to aching ears, externally and inside as ear plugs. The finely powdered root is an old Arabian remedy for drying up discharging parts of the skin, drying blisters and absorbing all kinds of watery fluids. It is also added to flaxseed to make a poultice for treatment of nonmalignant tumors.

Babies can be given hard (but not fibrous) pieces of washed licorice root to chew to help them cut their teeth.

Dose: The solid juice is the most practical way to employ licorice in medicine, approximately three inches of the solid juice sticks daily, dissolved in one cup of hot water. Sweeten with honey or brown sugar, take a small wineglass before meals.

Lobelia

Lobelia inflata. Lobeliaceae

This is a field plant found mainly in North America where it is commonly called "Indian tobacco." Its leaves are pointed and yellowish-green, its flowers hooded and of a brilliant blue (one of its common names being "blue cardinal flower"). Some varieties have red or purple flowers. This is one of the most important

herbs of the American Indians, and they have chosen well, for it belongs to a small group of herbs which are virtually cure-alls, being beneficial to the whole body and healing in all ailments. One species of lobelia, *Lobelia syphilitica* was used by the Canadian Indians in the treatment of all types of venereal diseases. One would hesitate, of course, to claim that this would nowadays and everywhere be the chosen remedy; but nevertheless the well-attested evidence of its effective use over a long period is worth taking into account. The whole plant, including the seed, is used.

Use, internal: It is especially good for quelling spasms, including heart spasms, convulsions, whooping cough, chorea and other nervous twitchings; will relieve vomiting of a spasmodic kind. For epilepsy, cramps, obstructions, stomach, liver and bladder disorders. For all fevers, especially typhus, scarlet fever and erysipelas. Lobelia is sometimes called "vomit weed," and its emetic properties make it valuable in treatment of rabies, when no other help is near.

Use, external: Used as a lotion or ointment for treatment of congested chest, skin ailments, many types of sores, non-malignant ulcers, swellings.

Dose: A small teaspoon of the crushed leaves, either green or dried. When green use a large teaspoon instead of a small one, pour over this a cupful of hot water (just off the boil), steep and sweeten, and take fasting night and morning. As an emetic, take a half-teaspoon of the dried powdered herb and pods, add a pinch of cayenne pepper, taken in a cup of warm water. Take the whole dose every half-hour until the stomach is thoroughly cleansed. There are several mid-nineteenth-century references to lobelia's emetic properties, and I have come across a significant note on its use in heavy doses for poisoning unwanted dogs. This is proof enough that lobelia should not be too lavishly used.

Lobelia Lotion: Steep for one week, one ounce of powdered lobelia in one cup of apple vinegar, apply to the affected areas, or make a Standard Brew of lobelia herb and apply as cold compress.

Plate 9. 1. Lavender 2. Mallow 3. Marjoram
4. Meadowsweet 5. Milk Thistle 6. Milkwort

LUCERNE. See ALFALFA.

MALLOW, MARSH

Althaea officinalis. Malvaceae

Found in waste places and in gardens. Likes especially salty marshes along sea shores. Leaves are greyish, softly hairy, toothed, ovate, flowers are mauve, lightly veined with red. The whole plant order of Malvaceae, which includes the *Althaea, Malva* and *Lavatera* genera (the hollyhock has already been mentioned in this chapter) is one of the most beneficial known to the herbalist, and all the species should be encouraged on farms and in gardens, and never eradicated as useless weeds. The whole plant is medicinal, from the roots to the fruits. It is also used in confectionery.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of all lung complaints, also sore throats, hoarseness, sore mouth and gums. All bowel troubles, inflammation, dysentery, diarrhea, hemorrhage. Internally and externally for all venereal diseases. The leaves when young are a good raw salad herb, and are much eaten by Bedouin Arabs and others. The fruits, called "cheeses" by peasant children because of their round form, are highly tonic.

❁ Use, external: *Mallow leaves* and *flowers* yield a healing lotion. *Mallow stems* are chewed by Gypsies, and when the pulp is mixed well with saliva, they apply this, warm from the mouth, to inflamed parts of the skin and to sores and swellings. They achieve wonderful cures with this primitive remedy.

Mallow roots make a useful poultice, and were once used to check mortification, one ancient name for mallow being "mortification plant." They contain a quantity of mucilaginous matter, also starch, asparagin, albumen (its most valued property), and a crystallizable sugar and a fixed oil. The root in fact contains over half its weight of sweet-tasting mucilage, which gives the plant its well-justified reputation, this mucilage having unique healing, soothing and lubricating powers.

For irritation of the vagina, internal and external as medicine and as a douche. As a lotion or poultice for all skin eruptions, sores, swellings, wounds, bruises, sprains. For breast troubles, soreness, inflammation, swellings. As a lotion to bathe sore or inflamed eyes, and for treatment of styes.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the flowers and leaves, sweetened with honey, a wineglass three times daily. Or, of three or four roots, sliced small and boiled gently for one hour in four cups of water, sweetened with honey, a wineglass three times daily.

Externally: Use the roots, prepared as above. The pulped leaves and flowers are applied to the surface of all inflamed areas, or used, slightly warmed, as a poultice. Or the leaves, crushed, can be steeped in light beer and used as a rub for bruises, sprains.

A popular confection known as *Marshmallow Sweets* is made from the dried, powdered roots. The ingredients are: two ounces marshmallow root and fourteen ounces fine sugar mixed with some mucilage (or gum) tragacanth and water of orange flowers, sufficient to bind all together.

Marigold

Calendula officinalis. Compositae

This common, or "pot," marigold is found in cultivated fields, especially in vineyards. Leaves are oval, pale-green, fading rapidly. Flowers are round, many petalled, aromatic, radiating, and of brilliant gold or orange. An "herb of the sun" with much of the sun's power in its flowers, which are the strongest part medicinally, although the whole plant is used.

☸ Use, internal: Treatment of all ailments of the arteries and veins, also heart diseases. As a tea it is both tonic and febrifuge. Because marigold flowers are of great benefit to the arteries and veins, the Arabs like to feed them to their swift horses — Arabian purebred horses are esteemed the world over. The whole plant is useful in inducing perspiration.

❀ Use, external: All skin ailments, including spotty complexion, greasy skin, eczema, warts. The mucilage in the flowers

and leaves makes the plant beneficial for the complexion, and marigolds have long been featured in old-fashioned complexion creams and lotions.

▣ Dose: Two or three flowers may be eaten raw in salads twice daily. Two teaspoons of marigold petals to a large cup of water, in tea-making. Add rubbed marigold petals to other herbal teas, such as lime blossom, red clover, speedwell, marjoram.

Externally: Make a lotion by gently boiling petals from a half-dozen marigold heads in one cup of milk. Or make a cream by melting ordinary cold cream or one of the vegetable or nut butters, and stirring in one part of bruised marigold petals to every two parts of cream or vegetable fat. Marigold oil can be made by steeping the petals in oil, such as sunflower (see pages 7-8). The leaves can be pulped and applied direct to cool inflamed parts and to cleanse and heal new and old sores.

Marjoram

Origanum vulgare. Labiatae

Found on hill slopes. Favors dry, sandy soils. Leaves are grey-green, slightly downy, highly aromatic and pleasant of scent. Flowers pale pink, sometimes white, very honey sweet. The fragrance of this plant gives it its name which means "joy of the mountain." The plant contains an aromatic oil which is highly tonic and greatly beneficial to man and animals. The whole plant is used. The pot marjoram (*Origanum onites*) is used mainly for flavoring.

❁ Use, internal: Much used as an aid to good digestion, and to expel poisons from the body. Treatment of all digestive complaints, including sour stomach, fermentation, bad breath. Will soothe sore throats and relieve coughs. Good for morning sickness, shaky nerves, fears and depression. Will allay nightmares and check bedwetting. For fevers, jaundice, rheumatism. Good for aches and pains, used externally and internally.

❀ Use, external: For treatment of earache, toothache, headache, sore throat.

▣ Dose: This pleasant-tasting herb can be rubbed on to salads, and used fresh or dry. The Spanish peasants do not think that lettuce salad is complete without a generous sprinkling of marjoram. Add also to soups and press into white cheese, place some sprigs between brown bread slices. As a tea, a heaped teaspoon of the herb to one cup of water.

Externally: A few drops (warmed) of a strong brew of marjoram, strained, put into the ears several times daily, will lessen pains and melt waxy accumulations. For aching teeth drop a few drops of the expressed oil into the cavity or cavities. For sore throat, make a strong brew and soak a cotton cloth in this when it is quite hot, and then bind around the throat. Also drink the tea freely, fortified with honey.

Meadowsweet

Filipendula ulmaria. Rosaceae

Found in damp meadows and along ditch sides. Leaves are dark green, shiny, somewhat like rose leaves, but thornless. Flowers are in creamy plumes and most sweetly scented. As with lavender, place bunches or sachets of the flowers in linen closets and wardrobes. The flowers are used.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of all fevers, blood disorders, high blood-pressure, diabetes. For dysentery, diarrhea, colic. The plant is a proven fever herb.

❀ Use, external: As a complexion tonic. Make a lotion by steeping meadowsweet flower heads in shallow dishes of water (preferably rain water) placed in the sun. This is an old Somerset Gypsy treatment. Dew collected from teasel and other plants is also added to improve the lotion.

▣ Dose: Of a handful of the flowers made into a Standard Brew, a wineglassful, sweetened with honey, morning and night.

Mignonette

Reseda lutea. Resedaceae

Found in shady places, waste places. Also cultivated in gardens, especially the fragrant mignonette, *Reseda odorata*. Leaves are small, silvery, flowers are in spikes, minute, inconspicuous, of brownish yellow, sweetly scented. The name *Reseda* means "calm," and indicates the narcotic properties of this plant.

❁ Use, internal: To calm the nerves, soothe irritated nerve ends. Treatment of asthma, hay-fever.

❁ Use, external: A wound herb, especially when added to other wound herbs to enhance the pain-relieving properties. To soothe inflamed eyes. French peasants would stuff pillows with *Reseda odorata* in the same way as English country folk would stuff muslin pillows with hops: to induce sweet sleep, ease nerves, and as a remedy against sleeplessness and nightmares.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, two tablespoons three times daily. *Externally*: Use the Standard Brew as a wound lotion.

Milk thistle

Silybum marianum (*Carduus marianum*). Compositae

Found on waste land and in pastures. Likes rich organic soil. Leaves are grey with veins of silver-white, large, with prickly edges. Flowers are large, thistle-form purple, and the involucre prickly and barbed. (Another species of milky-veined thistle grows in the Holy Land, also called after the Virgin Mary; see p. 81.)

The name — *Marianum* — is sometimes explained thus: a drop of milk from the breast of the Virgin Mary is said to have fallen on this thistle as she was cutting thistle fodder to feed her donkey. The thistle then became medicinal and edible. The word *Carduus* shows that the species was once used for carding wool. The word comes from the Gaelic word for a card for combing wool. On good ground it can reach man-height. All parts of the plants are useful, but especially the seeds.

❁ Use, internal: As a medicinal salad, blood-cleansing, a

jaundice remedy. Treatment of anemia, rickets, scurvy. The young shoots, called in Arabic *khurfesh*, are gathered and eaten by the Bedouin shepherds and other Arabs. I have eaten quantities when living in or visiting Bedouin tents: this is a very refreshing salad food. The green fleshy stems are the best part. The seeds to cure fits, epilepsy, once used against rabies.

❀ Use, external: A wound herb. Treats *petsas* — those big, deep sores found in eastern Mediterranean countries.

▣ Dose: The hearts of several plants eaten daily as a salad herb. Collect before the thistles become tough and spiky: trim off any soft prickles. Eat a teaspoonful of the seeds, morning and night, in treatment of those ailments for which they are intended.

Externally: Young, large leaves are trimmed of their prickles with scissors, gently crushed, then bound over wounds and sores. They will turn black later from the heat and foul matter drawn out.

Milkwort

Polygala vulgaris. Polygalaceae

Found on heaths and other sandy places. A tiny plant reaching only several inches. Leaves are tiny, narrow. Flowers are flat and bright blue. Named from the Greek, *gala*, milk, its name translates as "much milk."

❁ Use, internal: This little plant has long been valued for increasing milk yield, and is therefore indicated for nursing mothers and milk animals. To cool the blood.

▣ Dose: A handful eaten raw twice daily.

Mint

Mentha viridis, *M. spicata* and *M. rotundifolia*. Labiatae

Found in moist places, also amongst rocks. Widely cultivated in gardens for culinary use. Leaves are narrow, rough, very fragrant, possessing the peculiar mint scent and flavor. Flowers are thin spikes of pale mauve, and are also highly scented with mint odor. A wild water mint grows along ditch sides.

❁ Use, internal: Mint soothes as well as excites, quells stomach pains and gas, and has an altogether beneficial effect on the stomach and digestive tract. Will restore failing appetite and allay rheumatic pains. It was once esteemed as a cure for frigidity in both sexes, and even today is used as a tonic for bulls and stallions when their sexual powers are waning. The Arabs drink mint tea frequently, to ensure virility, also as a social drink, because Moslems are not wine drinkers. The only negative quality of this excellent herb is that it is apt to diminish milk secretion, and therefore should not be taken by nursing mothers. To treat suppression of urine, also suppressed menstruation. To quell vomiting and general nausea.To cure disorders of the digestive system, including acid stomach, flatulence, gastritis, diarrhea, dysentery. To treat infertility and lack of normal sexual desire.

❀ Use, external: As a rub for rheumatism, arthritis and stiff joints. As a headache remedy, use tea internally and a cold pack applied to the forehead externally.

A stronger *Mint Treatment for Headache*: Steep slices of raw potato in cold, strong brew of mint, and apply the potato slices to the head, placing a cloth wrung out in the water over them to keep them in place. Change the potato slices at intervals.

Mint Vinegar Lotion —an *excellent* headache remedy: Crush mint leaves; heat gently for a few minutes. Then steep in apple cider vinegar overnight. Use cold. Steep a cotton cloth in this lotion and lay it across the forehead. Renew frequently.

▣ Dose: To be eaten in salads, a few sprigs daily. Or make a strong tea sweetened with honey. Take a cupful after meals.

MISTLETOE, EUROPEAN

Viscum album. Viscaceae

Found in woodlands and orchards, growing as a parasite, lodged in bark crevices of the host tree. The seeds are often planted by the mistlethrush. Leaves are horseshoe shape and yellowish. The flowers are inconspicuous, greenish, and produce round, white, rather glutinous berries.

❁ Use, internal: This is a plant of legend because of its effect upon the nerves — soothing and calming. For that reason, in ancient herbal books mistletoe was often called the "golden bough." It is described as a remedy for epilepsy, also St. Vitus's Dance. Also for hysteria, convulsions, delirium, weak nerves, and to calm an over-excited heart.

❀ Use, external: For stiff joints, swellings, and to soothe burning piles, merely pound up a handful of berries and apply as a rub.

▣ Dose: Three or four berries taken fasting, night and morning, or can be macerated in a teaspoon of honey. (Not recommended for infants.)

Mullein

Verbascum thapsus. Scrophulariaceae

Found along waysides and on neglected land. Leaves are broad, grey and very downy, giving the plant one of its common names: "blanket herb." The flowers are in tall spikes and are of yellow, rose-form. This is a famed old household remedy and a favorite of the American Indians. It has always been a standby remedy for lung ailments in cattle, another of its common names being "cow lungwort." It is equally good for humans in this respect. The leaves and flowers are used. The flowers must be stored in tin containers for they turn black in light, once off the plant. Yet another name is "candle light," the down being used once as wicks.

❁ Use, internal: Valued for its effect on the chest area. Treatment of cough, pneumonia, pleurisy, bronchitis, tuberculosis, asthma (internally and as an inhalant). Also a remedy for bleeding from the mouth, nose, lungs, bowels. Treatment of dropsy, all bowel complaints, and hay fever. A tea of the flowers will promote sleep and soothe headaches.

❀ Use, external: Make hot fomentations of a cloth wrung out in a brew of the leaves or flowers, and apply to mumps, swollen glands, stiff neck, and the throat for inflamed tonsils. Some vinegar can be added to the fomentation with advantage. Use the Standard Brew as an application for warts.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the leaves and/or flowers, a small cupful night and morning. In treatment of dysentery, and bleeding from the bowels, boil a teaspoon of mullein leaves to one cup of new milk, add honey, nutmeg, cinnamon, and take two tablespoons of this drink after each bowel movement, or at least three times daily. For asthma, use an old kettle, place within a heaped tablespoonful of the leaves, cut fine, pour on to this some boiling water, and inhale the steam through the spout (keeping the head beneath a towel). This same inhalation can be used for hay fever, congestion of the nose, and all sinus troubles.

Mustard

Brassica nigra (black) or *Sinapis alba* (white). Cruciferae

Found on waste land and in gardens. Also cultivated as a pasture herb. Leaves are cress-form, hot, biting. Flowers are intense yellow, cross-form, also hot and biting. Seeds are long, narrow, also very hot. The herb is used both in medicine and to cleanse pastures. As a green manure crop, mustards are dug in just at flowering time. The condiment is usually prepared from the seeds of black mustard.

❁ Use, internal: An important antiseptic tonic. Treats poor appetite, flatulence, bad breath. Also colds, catarrh, pneumonia.

❀ Use, external: Mustard is a poultice and plaster herb. In external application it acts as an irritant and excitant and so is valuable in treatment of paralysis and pectoral complaints. As a poultice or rubbing remedy, to relieve internal and external inflammations, congested lungs, paralyzed limbs, rheumatic and arthritic pains and stiffness. Mustard baths are a decongestant.

▣ Dose: Eat the young leaves freely as a salad herb. A handful can be eaten easily, daily, as a spring tonic and general blood remedy. When a cold is threatening, chew a teaspoon of the seeds several times during the day to expel the accumulating mucus.

To make a *Mustard Poultice*: Use a handful of mustard powder to a handful of bran; make a paste with hot water; apply hot. To make a *Mustard Plaster*: To every handful of ground mustard add

three parts of wholewheat flour. Mix into a pliable paste with hot water. Then add further some hot vinegar (about two teaspoons of vinegar to one cup of the mustard-wholewheat flour mixture). Spread on a piece of cloth and apply hot over the area to be treated: chest, kidneys, paralyzed areas. In cases of sensitive skin where blisters may be provoked, add the white of an egg to every half pint measure of the mixture.

Myrtle

Myrtus communis. Myrtidea

This is a shrubby plant, very pleasantly aromatic throughout, from its roots to its flowers and berries. Leaves are small, clustered red and greyish-green. Its flowers are white and starry, and fall easily. It produces small, black, berries of pleasant flavor, which are in popular use as a jam. This is a mystical, as well as healing, shrub. It has special association with the mysterious black madonna icons, many of which have been found at the roots of myrtle bushes, and possess great healing powers. (I myself know, and deeply appreciate, the black madonna and child icon of the Kythera Isle, Greece. Known as the Myrtidea, her healing powers are manifold, and myrtle bushes are in abundance in the monastery garden.)

Use, internal: The *flowers* as a general tonic, especially for the heart and the nervous system; steeped in wine, with honey added, as a general tonic for the entire body. The berries, made into a jam using brown sugar and honey, are also a general tonic, a proven nerve fortifier, and a fertility aid for both sexes.

Dose: The flowers, one tablespoon to a cup of water, taken fasting, early morning. The liquor, a wineglassful nightly. The jam, eaten on wholewheat bread, as desired.

Nasturtium

Tropaeolum majus. Cruciferae

Found wild as an escapee from gardens. Well known as a garden plant, creeping and climbing. Leaves are umbrella-shape, frail,

brilliant green, conspicuously veined. Flowers of brilliant colors, especially oranges and reds, spurred, single or double. The whole plant has a hot, biting character, especially the seeds which were once much used as a caperlike pickle. The plant is an important antiseptic herb, also vermifuge (especially the seeds).

❁ Use, internal: As an antiseptic for the blood and digestive organs; to stimulate appetite. To cure nervous depression, tiredness, poor sight. Treatment of all worms. An excellent remedy for digestive griping is a teaspoon of nasturtium seeds ground into a powder and given in enough cold water to liquefy, every three hours.

❀ Use, external: A poultice of the seeds crushed and placed on flannel wrung out in hot water, for application to abscesses, boils, styes and old sores.

▣ Dose: Three or four leaves eaten raw in the salad; raw flowers can also be used. For worms treatment, eat six to ten seeds, best when eaten green. Eat these seeds fasting, night and morning. As a table pickle, the fruits are a substitute for capers: place seeds whole in apple cider vinegar, spice with cloves, laurel leaves and thyme.

Nettle

Urtica dioica. Urticaceae

Found over wasteland and in hedgerows. The leaves are serrated, dull green, hairy. These leaves possess an acrid fluid (formic acid) which burns the human skin, causing small blisters, hence the common name of this plant — "stinging nettle." Flowers are green-yellow, in clusters, small. The whole plant is powerfully medicinal, from the roots to the seed.

❁ Use, internal: *Nettle root* as a treatment of dropsy, lymphatic ailments, to expel gravel and stones from any organ in which they have formed, especially from the kidneys.

Nettle leaves as a vegetable (lightly boiled, for several minutes only until softened and the stinging quality is neutralized, then add some flaked oats and good butter). Also to cleanse the blood,

tone up the whole system. As a cure for anemia, rheumatism, sciatica, arthritis, obesity, infertility. To expel excess mucus from all parts of the body.

Nettle seeds heated gently in wine and swallowed as a cure for diarrhea and dysentery. As a Standard Brew, serves as a blood cleanser and to expel worms.

❀ Use, external: The Roman nettle (*Urtica urens*) species has large seed capsules like green balls and was planted extensively by Romans as a rheumatic remedy, for flogging the human skin to increase the blood flow. Also, as with bee and ant stings, the formic acid was considered beneficial. To this day bruised leaves of stinging nettles are rubbed on the skin in treatment of chronic rheumatism. As a nerve and tissue excitant, in treatment of chronic rheumatism, paralysis, stiffness of joints, failing muscular strength. The Gypsy method is to bind fresh-cut plants into a bunch and beat the affected parts with this until great heat is created in the limb. Then cotton cloths, soaked in cold vinegar, are applied and after several hours the nettle flogging is repeated. Many cures of chronic cases have been achieved with this primitive treatment — and, as already written, the Romans planted nettles especially for this curative purpose.

The leaves, applied fresh to bleeding wounds, will often act effectively within a few minutes.

Flowers and seed (the nettle produces much seed): as a hair rinse and for scalp massage. Will improve the color and texture of the hair and remove dandruff.

▣ Dose: Eat the boiled leaves as a vegetable as freely as you would eat spinach or other greens. No other green vegetable excels the nettle in mineral and vitamin content. This is one of the world's most chlorophyll-rich plants.

Of a Standard Brew of the leaves, a wineglass three times daily. Nettle juice can be made in a juicer. Standard Brew of the flowers and/or seed: similar dose to the leaves.

A Lotion for Aching Feet: Brew one handful of nettle leaves, and one of marshmallow leaves, in one and a half cups of whey or plain water. Use warm.

Plate 10. 1. Mullein 2. Mustard 3. Nettle (white)
4. Pansy 5. Pennyroyal 6. Periwinkle

Nettle, white or blind

Lamium album. Labiatae

Found in woodlands and as a garden weed. Leaves are nettle-form, downy. Flowers are hooded, white, two-lipped, in whorls. Entirely stingless. Known commonly also as "stingless nettle" or "dead nettle." Not related to the common stinging nettle.

❀ Use, external: To stem bleeding, especially nasal bleeding, bleeding from uterus, bowels, over-heavy menses. As a douche and as local application (of cloths soaked in a Standard Brew).

Oats

Avena sativa. Poaceae

Found in cornfields and on banksides and under cultivation in pastures. Leaves are typical grass-form, darkish, brittle, spikelets are drooping and frail, the grains are awned and turn dark gold when ripe. Oats are a strength-giving cereal. Low in starch, high in mineral content (especially potassium and phosphorus, also magnesium and calcium). Particularly rich in vitamin B, with some of the rare E and G also.

❀ Use, internal: As a nutritive food, nerve tonic, blood tonic, hair tonic. Remedy for rickets, bone-building. Important for ensuring strong nails and teeth. A basic food of the hardy Scottish Highlanders.

❀ Use, external: Finely ground oatmeal makes an excellent poultice, and is applied to the skin as a cleansing rub, either directly or via small bags. (See recipe for "Skin Tonic," next page.)

▣ Dose: Oats cannot be eaten raw, unless taken as flakes, when the slight heat used during their flaking dispenses with the need to cook them further and they can be eaten dry, raw, or with milk poured over.

Oatmeal Gruel: Take two ounces of sweet oatmeal, and mix into a thin paste by gradually adding cold water. Then add salt to taste. Heat a half-pint of cold water and add to this a wineglass of day-old milk. Before it boils add the oatmeal mixture. Simmer

gently but keep well below boiling point. Cook for three to five minutes. The taste is improved by adding a few sprigs of fragrant herbs such as marjoram or thyme.

Oatmeal Skin Tonic: Place finely ground oatmeal in a cotton bag, some drops of perfume being added. The bag is squeezed out in warm water and a milky lotion is produced, which is rubbed over the skin as a complexion treatment.

Opium poppy

Papaver somniferum. Papaveraceae

Found on hillsides and wasteland. Also widely cultivated. Leaves are grey-green, juicy. Flowers are of typical poppy form, white or white-purple-shaded, with a bitter scent. The seed capsules and seeds are the most important medicinal part. The virtues of opium have been known to mankind since most ancient times. It is one of the few herbs widely used by the orthodox medical profession which, so far, has no synthetic rival. The opium poppy yields a milky juice highly esteemed for its narcotic and stimulating properties. This juice contains many active principles, the most valued being morphine and codeine.

The white juice is collected from the unripe seed capsules, slits being made all around them, and the exuding milky juice is then carefully collected. This is allowed to solidify into cakes, baked in the sun until a deep brown color. The cakes are then coated with dried poppy leaves and seed and can be stored without losing their medicinal powers. The natural juice is harmless, a gentle soother of all organs of the body and lightly tonic. *The prepared drug is poisonous and should be used with great care.*

Properly used, opium is beneficial to allay pain (especially in cancer and other painful disorders): misused, it can destroy the human brain and body. One of the worst effects of the prepared drug is its influence on the intestinal nerves. It over-soothes them and causes them to become torpid, thus bringing on incurable constipation, so that opium addicts turn into white-fleshed beings with fetid breath. I saved the life of my daughter when she

was a few months old, and given up by Spanish doctors. I made a brew of opium poppy heads and fed teaspoonfuls of this to her day and night for several days. But this is a drastic remedy, not to be carried out by beginners in herbal medicine.

☸ Use, internal: To relieve pain, soothe the nerves, give gentle sleep.

❀ Use, external: As a vaginal or anal douche in treatment of irritation of vagina or bowels, and for inflammation generally. Treatment of aching teeth or ears, and inflamed or burning eyes.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the seed capsules, a tablespoon three times daily before meals, sweetened with honey.

Externally: Use the Standard Brew douche/enema. Squeeze juice from the capsules or from the base of the capsules after picking, dilute with two parts of warm water, and apply to cavities of aching teeth or drop into the ears. For eyes, bathe with a Standard Brew of the dried capsules.

Orchis, early purple

Dactylorhiza maculata. Orchidaceae

Found in meadows and pastures. Likes damp ground. Leaves are long, shiny, with dark spots. Flowers in spikes, rose-purple. Flowers are of peculiar orchid-form and very beautiful. The root tubers are the most important part of this herb, and give the Arabic name of *sahleb* — and the Turkish — *salep*. These tubers yield a flour which is widely used in the East as food and medicine. (See page193). The tubers are dug up after the plant has flowered, are then carefully sun-dried, crushed and eaten raw. Or they are made into a flour by grinding the sun-ripened tubers, mixing with honey; then hot water is stirred in slowly until the desired strength is reached. The drink is further thickened with the addition of slightly warmed milk. In Turkey, Arabia and Persia, salep is highly prized as a beverage for the weaning of infants, for invalids, for the aged, and for restoring sexual vigor to men and women whose powers are waning, or for those who are infertile. Also to give strength to women with birth problems.

❁ Use, internal: For the weaning of infants. As a general restorative. As an aphrodisiac. Treatment of exhaustion, general weakness, infertility, abortion, poor appetite, anemia. For weak nerves, twitching of limbs, trembling, nightmares.

▦ Dose: Two ounces of salep flour mixed into a thin paste with one and a half cups of hot water, then one and a half cups of warm milk are added, and honey. Can be flavored with ground cinnamon, nutmeg. Take a cupful morning and night. Give during difficult labor, but without addition of milk.

Important Note: Orchids of all kinds are now a protected plant in most countries. The salep orchid should be cultivated at home if culinary and medicinal use is to continue.

Pansy

Viola tricolor. Violaceae

Found on heaths, moors and roadsides. Leaves are small, scanty. Flowers bright purple, viola-shaped, marked with yellow and a little white. Popular name is "heart's-ease." Use the whole herb.

❁ Use, internal: Famed for its beneficial effects upon the heart, both as tonic and remedy. Known to aid speed for athletes. Treatment of heart weakness, pains and ailments, high blood pressure. Skin ailments, breast swellings, boils, abscesses.

▦ Dose: A tablespoon of the herb eaten raw, early morning, fasting. For heart pains: Of a Standard Brew, sweetened with honey, a wineglass every four hours.

Parsley

Petroselinum sativum. Umbelliferae

Found on dry rocky soil and cultivated in gardens. Leaves are curled or plain and of an intense green color. They have a characteristic odor and flavor, due to substance called *apiol*. All parts of the plant are used including the seed. The Spanish peasants warn against eating too much parsley; they say it will make people look older than their true years!

❁ Use, internal: Considered useful in cancer prevention and treatment, and taken when cancer is prevalent in families. Parsley is beneficial to the urinary system, and is used for bladder and kidney complaints. The root is a safe and effective aperient. Disorders of bladder and kidneys, gravel, stone, congestion, cystitis, dropsy, jaundice, rheumatism, arthritis, sciatica. Also anemia, rickets. Treatment of female ailments. A strong tea of the leaves provides a good drink for diabetics.

❀ Use, external: The bruised leaves steeped in vinegar will relieve swollen breasts. The cold leaves, bruised and worn inside a bodice around the breasts, will help to dry up the milk when the weaning of infants is desired. To clear head lice, use parsley seed tea (recipe below). To stimulate growth of hair, check baldness, remove dandruff, and soothe all kinds of insect stings, use parsley lotion (recipe below).

▣ Dose: A handful of fresh parsley leaves eaten once or twice daily in salad. Or it can be chopped fine and put into sandwiches, or mixed with white cottage cheese. Some parsley should be cultivated in pots for winter use. *Parsley Seed Tea*: A tablespoon of seed to two cups of water. Bring to the boil, steep until cold, and then drink a cupful morning and night. This same tea, when steeped at least seven hours and rubbed into the hair, will clear away head lice. *Parsley Lotion*: Use hot. Steep parsley seeds and/or leaves as for a Standard Brew. Massage the head and scalp with this.

Parsnip, wild

Pastinaca sativa. Umbelliferae

Found in field borders and in pastures. (The parsnip cultivated in gardens and fields is from the same stock.) Leaves are serrated, rough, generally shining due to the potassium content of this plant; downy below. Flowers inconspicuous yellowish, roots tapering with stringy ends, white inside, strongly scented. Parsnip is highly medicinal, tonic, bland, and makes a good drawing poultice.

❁ Use, internal: Nutritive, tonic. Can be eaten by diabetics, being highly rich in minerals, medicinal, and quite low in sugar content. Treatment of all urinary ailments, including stone, gravel.

❀ Use, external: Treatment of dropsy, as a poultice. Pulp up the root raw, and apply direct to the affected place. Will relieve abscesses, boils and swellings.

▣ Dose: Use plentifully as a vegetable, grated, raw. If lightly steamed, and served with white sauce seasoned with parsley, you have a typical French peasant dish.

Passionflower

Passiflora incarnata. Passifloracea

Named by the Spaniards, as in this beautiful flower they saw the passion of Christ, the flower symbolizing his crucifixion. The flower is said to have risen from the ground at the foot of the cross on which Christ was crucified. There the tears of Mary, mother of Christ, watered the ground, and this flower was born, its head of white and purple being wonderfully symbolic of the crucifixion. The filaments of the corona depict the thongs of the whip which flogged the Christ, the circle-shaped corona is the thorny crown, the carpels are the three nails, the pointed leaves are the spears which wounded Christ.

This is indeed a passionate plant of great power. It is a strong and high climber, and apt to dominate other plants. Indeed it almost reaches to the heavens. Both fruits and the flowers are used fresh or dried.

❁ Use, internal: The *flowers* are powerfully sedative, a proven soother of headaches, and one of the very best quellers of children's rages, given as a tea several times daily, and especially as night time beverage, sweetened with honey. The *fruits* are appreciated as a strengthener, and as a general, very useful, tonic. They are good tasting and very strengthening.

❀ Use, external: Juice pressed from passion fruits is soothing for sore, inflamed and aching eyes.

▣ Dose: The fruits, as a tonic, as much as desired. The flowers, as a sedative, a teaspoon brewed in a cup of warm water, squeeze well to extract all its properties.

Pennyroyal

Mentha pulegium. Labiatae

Found alongside brooks and streams and in marshy meadows. A diminutive plant. Leaves are tiny, stalkless, pointed, flowers are tiny, of lilac color, and in clusters. The name *pulegium* is from the Latin for "flea" and denotes the power of this plant as an insecticide.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of catarrh, cough, pneumonia, bronchitis, pleurisy and tuberculosis. For digestive ailments, including stomach gas, sour stomach, failing appetite; animals seek it for its tonic properties. Treats most female complaints, especially irregular or suppressed menstruation (should be taken hot at nighttime following a hot bath). For uterine ulcers, exhaustion after childbirth. A good remedy for female ills. Should not be taken by pregnant women.

❀ Use, external: A powerful mosquito repellent and much used for this purpose by the Arabs, the fresh leaves and flowers being well pulped and then rubbed onto the skin where exposed to insects. For skin ailments, bites of all kinds, to repel fleas, ticks. It is used also for bites from snakes and dogs. Treatment of headache, toothache, earache, as a mouthwash and throat gargle. The distilled (essential) oil of pennyroyal possesses soothing and warming powers and is useful to promote perspiration and to expel phlegm; helpful in all pulmonary ailments. *Publisher's Note*: Essential oil of pennyroyal should never be taken internally; ingestion of pennyroyal essential oil can have fatal consequences.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, two tablespoons before meals, three times daily. Pennyroyal is excellent brewed in whey or milk.

Externally: Steep pennyroyal herb in vinegar and apply, or make an herbal oil infusion (see pages 7-8).

Peony

Paeonia officinalis. Paeoniaceae

Found on hillsides and in pastures: also cultivated in gardens for its beautiful red or white heavily scented flowers. Leaves are wide and winged; stems thick and reddish; flowers solitary, large, round of form, richly colored, heavily perfumed. Evidence that this plant has valuable medicinal properties is found in its name, which is derived from "Paeon," the great herbalist of the ancient Greeks, mentioned by Theophrastus. The root is the chief medicinal part. The flowers are male and female and yield a syrupy extract. The wild peony is more powerfully medicinal than the garden variety but lacks perfume.

❁ Use, internal: Narcotic and antispasmodic. It is especially valued for treatment of epilepsy and all nervous disorders, especially those of a spasmodic nature (chorea, twitchings — including twitchings of eyelids).

❀ Use, external: In rheumatism, dropsy, and glandular ailments, rub the affected parts with the brew (not forgetting the addition of brandy or rum) and take internally, also.

▣ Dose: Of a brew from the roots, two tablespoons of this mixture before meals. Flake the roots finely and place an ounce in one and a half cups of cold water. Bring to the boil, simmer gently for fifteen minutes (keeping covered throughout). Remove from the fire and steep for three hours. Then strain and add a teaspoon of brandy or rum to every small wineglass of the brew.

Peppermint

Mentha x piperita. Labiatae

Found in damp meadows and verges of woodland, also widely cultivated in gardens. Leaves are downy, greyish; flowers are pale purple, in whorls, and very aromatic. The plant yields a warming oil. Indeed, few plants excel peppermint for its warming, heartening qualities. As a nerve-stimulating drink, it is far more effective than either coffee or tea, without sharing their harmful properties.

❁ Use, internal: This herb cleanses and strengthens the entire body. Good to take after shock, or swimming cramps, and for a feeling of faintness. Mint is a general tonic for the whole body, especially for the digestive and nervous system. For gas in stomach, stomach pains, cramps, indigestion, nausea, headache. For constipation, painful menstruation. To banish mental depression, induce sleep, cure fainting attacks.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, a cupful taken morning and night, or after meals in digestive troubles. More frequently — as desired — for other conditions; before bedtime for sleeplessness. Take many hot cups as a headache remedy, in preference to aspirin or similar pain-relief drugs. Sweeten with honey.

Periwinkle

Vinca major and *V. minor*. Apocynaceae

Found in woodlands and on shady banksides. A trailing plant. Leaves are dark green, glossy, oval and evergreen. Flowers are starry, pale-blue with lighter centers.

❁ Use, internal: It is an important nerve herb and a powerful astringent. Treatment of nervous ailments, including nervous debility. To check hemorrhages, internal and external, including bleeding from nose, vagina, deep wounds. To allay prolonged chronic diarrhea. Used to control an over-abundant flow of breast milk, or to dry up the milk supply during weaning of infants and to dry up dripping teats (internal and external treatment).

❀ Use, external: Astringent, to dry deep wounds, sores, ulcers.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, two tablespoons, with honey, morning and night. *Externally*: the same brew, cold, without honey.

Pimpernel, scarlet

Anagallis arvensis. Primulaceae

Found on wasteland and in fields. A tiny plant, almost thread-like. Leaves simple, tiny, yellowish green. Flowers are solitary, rounded, open only in sunlight, and of an intense red.

❁ Use, internal: The medicinal properties of this plant are more important than its appearance suggests. It is an ancient peasant remedy for the bites of snakes, scorpions and rabid animals, and was used both internally and externally for this purposes. Will calm rages in adults and children, if they can be induced to drink it. There is also a blue pimpernel.

❀ Use, external: Treatment of stings, bites. To soothe nettle rash, poison ivy rash; treatment of jaundice, dropsy, swelling. Though milder, the blue is similarly used; excellent for hepatitis.

▣ Dose: Macerate the whole plant and steep in cold water in sunlight for several hours (a handful of herb to a small cup of water). Of this, or a Standard Brew (when there is no sunlight available), a tablespoon three times daily. Also use Standard Brew for external application. Or, for bites, stings, crush the whole herb and apply direct to the place affected.

Plantain

Plantago major. Plantaginacaea

Found on wasteland and in fields. But will grow anywhere, even in the middle of a pathway. Its leaves are in flat rosettes, and are oval or lanceolate and prominently veined. (The name of this herb is derived from *planta*, foot, owing to the flat form of the leaves.) The flowering spike is peculiar and has a look of a slender bulrush in its narrow form and brownish flowers massed together into a narrow spike. Plantain is an old-fashioned herb and a favorite of the American Indians and Gypsies everywhere. The latter used to do a profitable trade peddling plantain ointment as a general cure-all.

❁ Use, internal: The *leaves* and *root* yield a soothing and healing mucilage which is somewhat like linseed, but even more powerfully medicinal. Valuable in ailments where internal inflammation has developed. For dysentery, diarrhea, ulcers, fevers. Used internally and externally to treat diseases of the urinary organs, including syphilis, and to check excessive discharges from the body, whether from the bowels or the uterus.

❀ Use, external: Gives speedy relief when applied to all kinds of bites and stings, and has been used against all kinds of bites, ranging from dogs, snakes, scorpions, and poisonous spiders to ants. Excellent for all skin ailments, wounds, sores, ulcers, skin rashes, eczema, erysipelas, boils, abscesses, scalds and burns, the crushed leaves being applied direct. For application to piles, aching teeth, inflamed eyes (using the root or leaves). Plantain is also used very successfully as a poultice herb.

▣ Dose: Eat a few young leaves, sliced, raw in the daily salad. Or make a Standard Brew of the finely cut leaves or from the sliced root; the root requires boiling for approximately five minutes and then steeping for several hours. Take a wineglass of the brew of either leaves or root, morning and night.

Externally: As a poultice, apply either pulped leaves or crushed and boiled roots, hot, on pieces of linen, and bind into place. ***Plantain ointment*** can be made by pounding up plantain leaves and mixing them into melted cold cream or warm vegetable fat.

Poppy, red field

Papaver rhoeas. Papaveraceae

Found in cornfields, waste places, gardens. Leaves are fernlike, hairy, silvery green. Flowers are of typical poppy-form, an intense red, the petals often having a blue-black base; petals are shed very readily. The heads droop when in bud. This plant is valued as a gentle narcotic. All parts except the root are medicinal. The seed capsules are the part with special pain-relieving qualities, and the seeds are considered highly tonic and are used in food as well as in medicine.

❀ Use, internal: *Poppy leaves* and *flowers* — especially the flowers — for throat and pectoral area, catarrh, cough, inflamed throat and lungs, pneumonia, pleurisy. To promote sweating in fevers and in lung ailments and to soothe the patient. For relief of asthma and hay fever. *Poppy leaves* are used as a tonic tea. *Poppy seed capsules* as a nervine, to soothe over-excitability of the mind and body, to induce mild sleep. Treatment of earache, local

twitchings. The *seed* as a tonic food and for flavoring, for garnishing, and for sprinkling on bread. Turkish peasants make tonic cakes from roasted poppy seed mixed with olive oil, honey and roasted flour to bind the mixture. In Israel, poppy seed cake is sold in most cake shops.

❀ Use, external: A lotion from the seed capsules for local aches, headaches, inflammations of eyes and ears, especially smarting eyes, ulcers, pinkeye. The white juice from the base of the unripe seed capsules can be applied as a wart remover.

▣ Dose: Of the whole plant, leaves to flowers, made into a Standard Brew, two tablespoons morning and night. As a gentle narcotic, a strong tea can be made from six of the seed capsules to one cup of water, prepared by standard method. Take a cupful three or four times during the day or as often as every two hours when relief of pain is the object. As a tonic, a teaspoon of the seeds every morning, preferably raw, unroasted.

Primrose

Primula vulgaris. Primulaceae

Found in woodlands, on riverbanks and by streams. Leaves are oval, crinkled, green-yellow. Flowers are solitary, frail, pale yellow, starry, sweetly scented. Another Gypsy favorite, especially of the English Gypsies. All parts of the plant are used.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of over-acidity. Also high blood pressure, rheumatism, arthritis, sciatica. For fits, paralysis, gallstones, worms. The seed heads when fully ripe are a good emetic.

▣ Dose: One handful of the flowers once daily, eaten raw (may be shredded up and mixed with honey to render them more palatable). Three or four leaves can be eaten raw as salad.

A Chilblain Ointment. Steam a handful of primrose leaves gently, then pound them into melted lanolin, until all is absorbed. Add a teaspoon or more of honey and work it into the mixture. A few drops of oil of thyme can be added with advantage. Apply ointment warm to the chilblains and cover the feet with large loosefitting cotton socks (do not use wool or nylon for this purpose).

Plate 11. 1. Pimpernel 2. Plantain 3. Puffball
4. Purslane 5. Ragwort 6. Rock Rose

Puffball fungi

Clavatia species

When these mushrooms are crushed and applied to wounds, they check excessive bleeding and promote healing. Use when fully ripe, with clouds of black or brown spores, which are the active part. Learnt from the Manouche Gypsies of Alsace-Lorraine.

Pumpkin

Cucurbita maxima. Cucurbitaceae

Cultivated in gardens. Leaves are vine-shaped, rough. Flowers tubular, brilliant orange, fall early. Flowers, fruit, and seeds are all medicinal. Magic properties have since ancient times been associated with pumpkin seed. In the Doctrine of Signatures — which is a belief that the form of plants, their roots, leaves, flowers, fruits, seeds, resemble the organ or ailment for which they are curative — the seeds of pumpkin resemble the flat white segments of the tapeworm.

Use, internal: The *flowers* make a reviving, tonic tea (three flowers to a cup of water) and, stuffed with rice, provide a food. The *fruit* (vegetable) as a nutritive, mineral and vitamin rich tonic food, to strengthen the blood; as an anemia and rickets remedy. Also soothes delicate stomachs. The *seeds* are nervine, tonic, and also have remarkable powers for expelling tapeworm. In acetone, they kill mosquito larvae.

Use, external: The bruised *leaves* repel flies. Slices of roasted pumpkin, cut from the outer skin, make a good drawing poultice for the treatment of boils and abscesses. Should be applied as hot as can be tolerated.

Dose: Of the fruit, several large slices eaten daily. It is not very palatable, but if possible take a portion of the pumpkin raw, grated finely. The rest can be lightly boiled or roasted.

Tapeworm Treatment with Pumpkin Seed: Use skimmed, raw (if possible) milk as the medium for the mixture, made up as follows: Two tablespoons of well-crushed, sun-dried or oven-dried pumpkin seed, plus one tablespoonful unrefined castor oil, one

tablespoonful honey. Having fasted the previous day on fruit juices only, drink the pumpkin seed mixture the following early morning on an empty stomach. After one and a half hours, drink a purging mixture made from one tablespoonful castor oil and one tablespoon honey, stirred into half a cup of lemon juice (made from the juice of three lemons diluted with several tablespoons of tepid water). The patient should remain in bed until the purge has worked. And for the rest of the day and the following day, remain on a light diet of skimmed, diluted milk and flaked oats. No cure is obtained unless the *head* of the worm is expelled.

Raw pumpkin seeds, well chewed, may be taken daily to prevent worm infestation. Similarly, seeds of all varieties of melons, of cucumber, and of papaya may be chewed and swallowed as a vermifuge. Arabian camel drivers chew watermelon seeds to increase endurance, and hold thirst at bay on long journeys. All these seeds may be lightly sprinkled with salt and water and gently roasted for storing in jars or tins and taken as an occasional tonic.

Purslane

Portulaca oleracea. Portulacaceae

Found in damp pastures and in orchards or on dry land after heavy rains. Leaves are vivid green, small, opposite, fleshy. Stems also fleshy. Flowers, small, bright yellow, forming many small black seeds. Although this is a common weed in most parts of the world, I had never used it or heard about it until I lived in tropical Mexico, where it was our only available green salad food, always cooling, always refreshing. Since, I have discovered its popular use in Arab countries as a salad food and medicine. In earlier times it was cultivated as a valued potherb in both Europe and North America.

❁ Use, internal: The whole plant is refrigerant, and soothing. Excellent in blood disorders and fevers. The whole plant is slightly laxative (the seeds are vermifuge). Treatment of impure blood, overheated blood, fevers, headache, anemia, rickets. For high blood pressure, diabetes.

▣ Dose: One handful or more, as a salad, once or twice daily. *Externally*: Pulp up the raw herb and apply where needed, binding into position with a damp cotton cloth. A teaspoonful of seeds every morning cures worms.

Queen of the Meadow

Eupatorium purpureum. Compositae

Found on low-lying land, likes damp soil. Leaves are medium, lance-shaped. Flowers are purple, tubular, growing in corymbs. The roots are the medicinal part used, and they are rather bitter, emitting, when sliced, an "old hay" smell.

This plant is the popular "Joe pye weed" of the American pioneer days, and a favorite of the American Indians. Its botanical name recalls a king of remote times; its common name (Joe pye), is that of an Indian medicine-man. Formerly it was used in most American homes as a valued remedy against rheumatism and backache, ailments typical of the strenuous physical work and primitive housing conditions of those times. Another common name of this plant is "gravel root."

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of all rheumatic complaints, all ills of the joints, including aching or sprained back. For all strains and sprains, and for treatment of pulled ligaments and tendons. Disorders of the urinary system; powerful effects on the kidneys and bladder; removing gravel and stones. Treatment of inflamed bladder, scanty urine, burning urine, also dropsy. Soothing to the nerves, for neuralgia, headache, diabetes. An old remedy for gout.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the finely sliced root, two tablespoons morning and night.

Quince

Cydonia oblonga. Rosaceae

I am considering this more as a shrub than a tree, as it is a shrub in its wild form. Quince happens to be a favorite of mine, owing to its valuable medicinal powers. Found in woodlands and cultivated in orchards and gardens. Leaves are typical apple-tree form, of greyish green. Flowers are rose-form, large, very pink and sweetly scented. The fruits are large, pear-shaped, turning very hard, and yellow-brown when ripe. The fruit is the medicinal part.

❁ Use, internal: The *fruit* is febrifuge, soothing, cooling. Use as a raw pulp for treatment of diarrhea, dysentery, hemorrhage of the bowels, and for venereal diseases (internally and externally).

❀ Use, external: To cleanse all discharging organs of the body. For all kinds of eye troubles, including general inflammation, ulcers, cysts and styes. The *raw juice* is also a hair tonic, and should be massaged into the scalp. Use the diluted juice, with a little lemon juice added, as a throat gargle; it is excellent for sore or relaxed throats; was once much used by singers to strengthen their voices. The *seeds* yield a valuable lotion when brewed. The inner side of the *peel* of the fruit has healing powers and is much used by Spanish Gypsies and others for this purpose. The brewed peel is a hair tonic, and is used as a hair lotion in Arabian countries and is likewise valued as a hair grower for the manes and tails of the valued Arabian purebred horses.

▣ Dose: One or two fruits, raw, grated, to be taken daily. Flavor with lemon juice and sweeten with honey. For those who cannot tolerate the rather coarse flesh of the quince, the fruit can be gently heated in sufficient water to cover, and cooked until soft, then sweetened with honey. Give a half cupful of the pulped fruit twice daily. A speedy remedy for griping stomach and intestinal pains is a teaspoon of quince juice with two powdered cloves, taken every few hours. The cooked, sieved fruit, reboiled with much sugar and half a lemon to every cupful of fruit, makes *Carne de membrillo*, the famous quince meat, a favorite tonic sweetmeat of the Spanish people and the Sephardic Jews.

Of a Standard Brew of the finely sliced fruit, two tablespoons morning and night.

Ragwort

Senecio jacobaea, S. aureus. Compositae

Found on wasteland and in fields; loves the sun. The presence of ragwort is generally a sign of poor land. Leaves are finely cut, yellowish green. Flowers are starry, bright yellow, pungently aromatic. Very attractive to butterflies. The flowers of ragwort have important forces which magnetize and remove deep-seated impurities, and which also dissolve swellings.

Use, internal: American Indian women used this herb as a cure for all the ailments peculiar to their sex. However, since many herbalists have noted that ragwort can cause quite severe digestive upsets (I have observed this also in cattle when they have eaten too freely of ragwort) I advise its *external use only.*

Use, external: Treatment of all skin ailments, gatherings, inflamed areas, tumors — soft and hard — and all types of swellings. Also boils, abscesses, whitlows.

Dose: Two handfuls of the flowers made into a Standard Brew, as fomentation or in massage. Use hot.

Raspberry

Rubus idaeus. Rosaceae

Found in woodlands and in shady hedgerows; likes water. Leaves are typical rose-form, thorny, with silver undersides. Flowers are also rose-form, pure white, with prominent stamens. Stems are bending and thorny. The fruits are a brilliant red, darkening when ripe, and very juicy. Raspberries are also widely cultivated in gardens, but the cultivated plant loses much of its medicinal powers, though still valuable. The wild raspberry is one of the most potent of all herbs and is not affected by mosaic disease which often attacks the cultivated species. When using cultivated plants, care must be taken to see that they are disease-free.

Use, internal: The foliage of the raspberry plant possesses a very active principle named *fragrine.* Fragrine has a special influence on the female organs of reproduction, especially on the muscles of the pelvic region and on the uterus. It is used as a female tonic throughout pregnancy and also during labor if any difficulty is encountered. It is also used to bring down retained afterbirth. It is an acclaimed remedy for sterility or barrenness in men and women. Indeed, wild raspberry foliage and shoots are a well-known tonic for stallions and bulls. It will relieve morning sickness. The foliage and fruits are used as an aid to easy childbirth, for health of the mother and embryo. It would be rare for a Gypsy woman to go through pregnancy without having taken raspberry leaf tea from the first weeks of knowledge of conception. And the true nomad Gypsy gives birth to her children with the ease of the wild vixen.

The whole plant also has other independent medicinal properties. The astringent properties of wild raspberry are employed to advantage in the treatment of dysentery and diarrhea, especially the summer diarrheas and fevers of infants. The ripe *fruits* are eaten as a general tonic, as a nervine, to supply readily assimilable iron, as a remedy for paleness, anemia, fretfulness, general lack of energy.

Use, external: As a strengthening application for prolapsed uterus. As a douche, use the Standard Brew cold. Also as a gargle for sore throats.

Dose: Eat as many of the ripe fruits as desired, as often as possible. Of a Standard Brew of the foliage, a large cupful on rising every morning during pregnancy; a small cupful morning and night for other treatments.

In difficult labor, or *To Bring Down Retained Afterbirth*: Strong drinks of raspberry leaf brew, with a teaspoon of crushed ivy leaves to every two of raspberry leaves, taken every two or three hours. This treatment has been successful when the more popular ergot has failed. Add honey to give the patient extra strength.

Reed (great reed)

Arundo phragmites, A. donax. Poaceae

Found by rivers and lakes and in ditches. The culms (or blades) grow six feet high and even taller. Their inner white pith is medicinal.

❁ Use, internal: For all urinary ailments, for ailments of bladder and kidneys. Useful in treatment of dropsy, lymphatic ailments, goiter.

❀ Use, external: The pulped culms of the great reed applied to aching feet and joints give much relief.

▦ Dose: Extract the white inner pith by peeling the reeds, and eat a tablespoonful, raw, three times daily.

Rhubarb (wild rhubarb)

Rheum palmatum, R. rhaporticum. Polygonaceae

Wild, found on wasteland. Widely cultivated in gardens. Leaves are very large, umbrella-like, of rough texture, solitary and borne on very thick, fleshy, rose-hued stalks, which are edible, also medicinal. The leaves themselves are rank and not edible, as they possess some poisonous properties. The root is the most medicinal part. It has two unique substances, *binalate of potassium* and *rhubarbrin*, which are the secret of it medicinal virtues.

❁ Use, internal: One of the best aperients known to the herbalist. Treatment of constipation in all forms including chronic. An excellent laxative for infants on account of its smooth and mild action and because it is also tonic to the bowels. In small doses the root acts in a contrary way and will ease diarrhea, dysentery. Treatment of headache, jaundice and all liver troubles. To reduce distended stomach in children, also for anemia. For biliousness, lack of appetite, bad breath, colitis.

▦ Dose: Eat a few of the raw young stems frequently as a bowel tonic and mild laxative. Take as much as desired of the lightly cooked stems and hearts, flavored with lemon juice, sweetened with honey or sugar, for the purposes given above.

For a strong purge, take ten to thirty grains of prepared rhubarb, obtainable from pharmacies. Dose varies according to age and weight of person, but in any case overdose is harmless. As a laxative from eight to twelve grains. As a tonic three to six grains. Of syrup of rhubarb take one teaspoon. Take prepared rhubarb in the early morning, on an empty stomach.

Rock rose

Helianthemum canadense. Cistaceae

Found on dry, rocky, soil, on hillsides and banks. A sun-loving plant. Leaves are dark. Flowers like small single roses, frail, petals more square, prominent stamens, color varied. This aromatic and astringent plant yields a valuable oil. It is one more of the short list of plants which herbalists consider beneficial in treatment of cancer. It has internal and external uses.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of venereal diseases. Considered good for infants, to cure their fears and give them courage. A remedy for trembling. A legendary reputation as a plant endowed with powers over the mind and spirit.

❀ Use, external: Standard Brew as a gargle for sore and ulcerated throats.

▦ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of leaves and/or flowers, used internally, a tablespoon three times daily. Of the oil, two to three drops taken on a lump of sugar.

Ancient Remedy for Timidity: For children (and adults, if desired). Steep flowers of rock rose in sunlight and moonlight for two or three days, in, preferably, a shallow glass dish. At early morning and before bedtime a teaspoonful of the dish's contents is taken.

Rose (*briar rose*)

Rosa species. Rosaceae

Found in hedgerows and woodlands. Leaves are of rose-form, with fine prickles. Flowers, large, pink or creamy, sweetly scented.

Fruits are large, hard, red, called hips. All species of rose, including the garden species, are useful.

The root was once advocated as a cure for rabies, and this is the possible reason for the name of one species of wild rose, *Rosa canina*, dog rose. The ancient Celts used to employ this against infected wolf bites for themselves and for their domestic animals.

The petals of the strongly scented species of garden rose, in particular the dark red roses, make a much valued sweetmeat in the Orient: it is also found in Provence, France. Also a syrup of rose is made. The Turks prepare and sell a very valuable concentrated essence of roses, known as *attar* of roses.

❁ Use, internal: A valuable tonic for the whole system and especially good for the heart. A gentle astringent; slightly laxative. The *fruits* are also gently laxative, and very vitamin-rich, especially in vitamin C, cooling to the blood, and of much benefit for cure of all female ailments, including leucorrhea, metritis, threatened miscarriage. Treatment of catarrh, diarrhea, hemorrhages.

❁ Use, external: Petals of the white rose make a soothing lotion, cooling and astringent, for sore or strained eyes. Essential oil of roses is an active heart and brain tonic, and for the ovaries and uterus.

▣ Dose: Two teaspoons of rose *petals*, pounded until softened and then taken in honey, in the early morning. Six to eight *fruits* (hips) daily, either eaten raw or made into a tea and sweetened with honey. The fruits should be gently boiled until soft, when taken as a tea. Drink a small cupful morning and night. Dose of the oil is a few drops on a lump of sugar.

Confiture of Red Roses (Turkish recipe): For every pound of freshly gathered red rose petals, take one pound of cane sugar, three tablespoons of honey, and the juice of one lemon. Make this delicacy of roses preferably in an enamel or steel pan to prevent burning. First add the lemon juice to the sugar, and gently heat until dissolved, then slowly add the honey, and heat further. When all the sugar is melted, not before, slowly add the rose petals. Boil gently for an hour or so, stirring frequently, until the mixture begins to harden well against the sides of the pan. When

almost ready to take from the fire, add about three drops of almond oil to every pound weight of the mixture, and further heat for a few minutes. The oil makes the rose confiture shiny and also helps it set better. But do not use too much almond oil or it will interfere with the natural, delicious taste of the roses; add only a few drops. Spoon out into clean warm jars, and cover securely when cold.

Rosemary

Rosmarinus officinalis. Labiatae

Found in sandy and rocky places, on slopes of mountains and on cliffsides; can root where there is scanty soil. Loves the sun, loves the dew. Leaves are small, dark, shiny, hard and very aromatic. Flowers are small, lipped, varying from white-silver to dark blue. The sea has given rosemary its name: *Ros Marinus*, dew of the sea.

As an herbalist, if my name could be associated with any plant I would choose rosemary. I use it more than any other plant and I love it most of all. As Johnny Appleseed planted apples, so I plant rosemary wherever I travel. My present garden in Galilee is filled with rosemary grown from mere slips heeled into the earth.

Rosemary is widely cultivated in gardens, where it is not only valued for its pleasant scent, its medicinal and culinary uses, but also for the protection against insect pests that it gives to neighboring plants and orchard trees. Rosemary is another of the few cure-all herbs of the herbalist. It is also a proven supreme heart tonic, one of the few powerful heart tonics which is not a drastic drug. It is one of the most important of the aromatics, yielding a camphorated type of dark green oil, which has many medicinal uses.

The Gypsies especially love rosemary, and in former days they used to peddle the world over a preparation of flowering rosemary sprigs known as "The Queen of Hungary's Water," much valued as a cure-all for the ills of mankind, and as a general beautifier for women.

The Arabs also greatly value rosemary. Herdsmen encourage their flocks to pasture on rosemary because of the pleasant taste

this plant imparts to the milk. (It is equally good for nursing mothers, carrying the values of this herb through the milkflow to the feeding infant.)

In ancient times, rosemary was used in French churches and cathedrals for perfume, by crushing underfoot. The Gypsies hang sprigs of rosemary in their vans as a protection against evil forces, and under the pillow to protect sleepers — especially infants and children — and to prevent nightmares. I used it for my children.

Use, internal: Treatment of all ailments of the heart, also as a general heart tonic. Treatments of high blood pressure, headaches, all nervous ailments. For all female ailments, including threatened miscarriage. For impure blood, gastritis, torpid liver, obesity. Also in cooking to flavor and garnish.

Use, external: Spanish peasants pound rosemary into common salt and consider this remedy as the finest of all wound cures. The Arabs also extol this wound remedy; they sprinkle the dried powdered herb on the umbilical cord of newborn infants as an astringent and antiseptic treatment. Also valued as a powerful insecticide, and as a wash to strengthen and brighten the hair and to check unnatural falling of hair. For wounds of all kinds, also bites and stings.

Dose: A sprig or so can be eaten raw daily in the salad, also a few leaves added, chopped finely, to sandwiches, white cheese, soups, omelettes. Also make a Standard Brew and drink as a warm tea, sweetened with honey, frequently during the day and as a nightcap. Rosemary blends well with wormwood or vervain, sage and lavender, to make a most powerful antiseptic drink, invaluable in treatment of fevers and blood disorders.

Externally: The Standard Brew as a hair lotion, or a few drops of the infused oil, rubbed into the scalp. For wounds or sores, use the lotion, the fresh herb pounded into salt and sprinkled on, or the fresh or dried herb pounded into a powder and applied. As an insecticide, combine one teaspoon of rosemary oil to one cup of light beer. Or apply the dried herb in fine powder form mixed with wormwood in equal amounts.

Plate 12. 1. Rosemary 2. Rue 3. Saffron
4. Sage 5. St. John's Wort 6. Santolina

Rue

Ruta graveolens. Rutaceae

Found in mountainous and barren places. A sun loving plant. Widely cultivated in gardens, especially in Oriental countries where it is grown to protect the household against all evils. Rue decreases in value when dried. Leaves are much divided, flat, of greyish color, very strongly aromatic and bitter tasting. Flowers are greenish-yellow, small, also flat, pungent of scent, and bitter.

Rue contains a peculiar principle called *rutin*, which is highly medicinal. It has been proven effective as a strengthener of the blood vessels, nerves and glands. Rutin also imparts hardness to the bones, teeth and nails. Doubtless the many legendary beliefs concerning rue come from the benefits that it imparts to those who use it.

Rue was always a favored herb of the high priests in ancient times, and is, to this present day, also a cherished herb of the Arabs because this is the only one which Mohamet is known to have blessed. Arabic literature tells that Mohamet was cured of a fatal illness by the use of rue, which was brought to him by the Gypsies when all the other remedies of his doctors had failed and he was dying. This herb is reputed to resist all contagious poisons. In Iraq it is used to overcome fears and to make humans brave.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of all nervous ailments including hysteria, epilepsy, convulsions in children. Like rosemary, rue has an ancient reputation for curing insanity. Treatment of all women's ailments, including faulty menstruation, congestion of the uterus, extreme pains in pregnancy. Good for all ailments of the arteries and veins and for weakness and palpitations of the heart. Good for fevers, colic, worms, also for treatment of rabies. Rue is a remarkable expeller of poisons.

Leaves flavor wine and olives; *flowers* used for fertility. In Iraq, rue is eaten, in sprigs, together with raisins.

❁ Use, external: Rue sprigs are oiled and inserted into the anus of infants to remove worms at night, or to relieve blocked

anus. Externally in dried powder form or as a lotion, for treatment of all skin parasites, including head lice; also for ringworm. As a lotion for treatment of eye ailments.

Dose: The herb is a potent one, therefore dosage should be small. A small teaspoonful of the fresh herb to a tall glass of water is prepared as a Standard Brew, and two tablespoons may be taken twice daily. Small sprigs of fresh rue infused in hot water and sweetened with honey are given to infants with upset stomachs. (*Publisher's Caution*: Honey can be dangerous for infants under one year of age.)

Rue Flower Eye Water: For eye ailments, including treatment of cataract. Dissolve rue flowers by placing in a shallow vessel in the sunlight, adding a little white wine to the water — a teaspoon of wine to a cup of water. Measure of rue flowers is one tablespoonful to a cup. Infuse the flowers for three days. (When no sunlight is available, then slow heating in an oven with open door will do.) Bathe the eyes several times daily with the rue flower water.

Rue has long been used as an antidote to the bites of snakes. Suck out the poison or cut out with the point of a sharp knife, in the usual way. Infuse two ounces of fresh rue in a two cups of beer, drink this and apply some frequently to the bitten area.

Rye grass

Secale cereale. Poaceae

Found on pasture-land and in cultivation. Leaves of typical grass-form, the glumes on the flowering spikes turn very dark when ripened, and when rubbed emit a rather sour smell which is typical of rye. In ancient times, it was believed that rye, because of its potency, would destroy the wheat crop if it seeded amongst it. Its name is from the Gaelic, "to destroy."

This is a powerful cereal, very rich in vitamins and minerals, especially iron, and supplies valuable roughage. Rye is the basic cereal of the hardy Russians and Scandinavians.

Use, internal: Muscle-building and nonfattening. A good general digestive and nerve tonic. As a cereal, makes very health-

ful bread and flat biscuits. The typical rye bread has caraway seeds mixed in with the rye flour when making the dough. Rye bread has excellent keeping qualities and will last for several weeks.

❀ Use, external: Rye bread soaked in hot water makes a good drawing poultice for all types of swellings and cysts.

Safflower

Carthamus tinctorius. Compositae

Found mostly in Mediterranean countries in its wild form, frequently dry plains and hill slopes. Also widely cultivated in other lands, including England and America, on account of the rich yellow dye that it yields. (*Tinctoris* means dye or woad.) Known also as "dyer's saffron," the flowers yield two dyes, a bright yellow which can be extracted in water, and a vivid red extracted only by alcohol. Leaves are alternate, smooth and shining. Flowers are numerous, long, slender, of orange hue and with a pungent scent. The flowers and seed are the parts used.

Safflower is sometimes called false saffron, to distinguish it from the saffron crocus, *Crocus sativus* (Iridaceae), which yields saffron from its dried stigmas. Crocus saffron is a tonic and a digestive aid, a proven remedy for jaundice (a pinch taken in a glass of white wine). A generous pinch of saffron from crocus styles will color flour and rice, saffron buns being once very popular in England. It was once common practice to mix safflower petals with crocus saffron.

❁ Use, internal: Safflower, considered an old-fashioned remedy, has many valuable medicinal powers. It is especially effective in treatment of fevers, and is considered a specific for scarlet fever, chicken pox, measles and other eruptive diseases. Will produce profuse sweating when taken as a hot beverage. Treatment of irregular menstruation.

As a natural coloring and flavoring for food, such as cakes, rice. As a dye for cloth.

℞ Dose: Of a teaspoon of the flowers heated gently in one and a half cups of water (or half water and half milk), a wineglass

morning and night. As a gentle laxative, a half-teaspoon of the seeds to a cup of hot water.

Sage

Salvia officinalis. Labiatae

Found on sunny hillsides and rocky grounds, and cultivated in gardens. Leaves are oval, rather woolly, strongly aromatic. Flowers are in whorls and vary from silver to deep blue in color, highly aromatic. This is another of the major herbs of the herbalist and has been in the service of mankind since ancient times. Its name is from the Latin *salvere*, "to be well" and "to save." A tea of sage tops is one of the most refreshing and beneficial available to mankind. The scent from sage tea is a feature of Greek villages as it is brewed in the cafes.

The wild sage of Mexico and neighboring regions, *Salvia azurea grandiflora*, with its blue, highly scented blossoms, is powerfully medicinal, as is *Salvia colorata*, red sage, which is considered a cure-all, especially for ailments of the throat and lungs, including tuberculosis.

❁ Use, internal: This plant is believed to exert a beneficial influence over the human spirit, and to quell unnatural or vicious sexual desires. It will also restore normal virility when the failure is not due to venereal disease. Sage is a proven help in fevers, and is also a vermifuge and insecticide. A valued heart tonic and fever cure. For colds, sore throats, coughs (as tea and gargle), sore and ulcerated mouths. All fevers, digestive ailments (especially flatulence and lack of appetite), constipation, obesity. To support the milk yield and to give tonic properties to the milk. For all nervous ailments, including paralysis and mild mental derangement; to improve the memory. Also used to flavor cheese.

❁ Use, external: For all forms of wounds, sores, ulcers. To allay excessive bleeding. An effective hair tonic: to stimulate growth, tone up the color, act as a setting lotion, and remove dandruff. To deter moths, cockroaches and rodents from clothes closets. Also as an inhalation and in sweat baths. A teeth cleanser.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, a cupful morning and night, sweetened with honey. As sage is a potent herb, a teaspoon of the herb to one cup of water is sufficient. Sage can also be infused in the sunlight without requiring fire heat, to yield pleasantly flavored and tonic water.

Externally: Use the Standard Brew as a lotion; the pulped herb for wounds. For clothes closets, tie the sage in bunches and place within. Sage is excellent as an inhalation for congestion of the nose and head, and may be placed in the water for steam baths, having been much used in this way by the ancient Mexicans.

SAINT JOHN'S WORT

Hypericum perforatum. Hypericaceae

Found along waysides and in woodlands. Leaves are multiform, frail, and peculiar for the bright specks covering them, which are oil glands. The flowers are terminal and held in leafy panicles. They are bright yellow, of poppy form, and have a crowd of silky prominent stamens. The plant possesses medicinal resins, also acids and a gum. St John's wort is said to protect the home against harm and loss; in former times much used in magic charms.

❁ Use, internal: The herb is astringent and soothing. Treatment of wounds and ulcers, internal and external. Also for hemorrhages, dysentery, diarrhea, jaundice, earache, toothache, hysteria, and general nervousness, fainting fits, rheumatism, arthritis, worms, especially threadworms.

❀ Use, external: For all wounds, eruptions, abrasions, blisters of all kinds, inflammations, rashes — including those from infectious ailments, such as scarlet fever and typhus. Also for burns and scalds. The fresh flowers, steeped in sun- (or fire-) warmed olive oil, yield the famed oil of St John's wort, much used by the crusader knights. The flowers combined with chamomile, and mixed with melted fat with some beeswax added, give an ointment which is renowned for its pain quelling and healing properties.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, two tablespoons three times daily. *Externally*: Use the Standard Brew as a lotion. For oil of St. John's

wort, steep one handful of the finely cut flowers in one cup of olive oil and heat gently (see Essential Oils of Herbs. pages 7-8). Apply the oil as a soothing rub. It will also deter insects.

Sanicle

Sanicula mariandica. Umbelliferae

Found in woods and thickets. Leaves are finely serrate and dark. Flowers are greenish white and in umbels. The many barren flowerlets are stalkless. The plant derives its name from a word meaning "to heal." It is another intensely curative herb. A favorite of the crusaders; they often painted pictures of sanicle on their shields. It is written that this plant is promised "to make whole and sound alle inwarde hurts and outwards woundes of man." Not to be confused with "American" and "Yorkshire" sanicles.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of all internal wounds, ulcers, hemorrhages. As a remedy for stomachache and aches in the bowels. Treatment of inflamed lungs and tuberculosis.

❀ Use, external: For all wounds and sores, sore throat, inflamed gums, treatment of rashes, erysipelas.

▣ Dose: Of a weak tea, a tablespoon before meals.

Santolina

Santolina species. Compositae

Found on seacliffs and on wasteland; cultivated in gardens, being a common border herb. Leaves are grey, ferny in form, rather woolly and highly aromatic. Flowers are small, yellow, buttonform and also very aromatic. A very tonic, tangy tea herb.

❁ Use, internal: As a fever and worm remedy.

❀ Use, external: A strong brew as a wound herb. Infused in vinegar as a rheumatism rub. The flowers sun-infused in oil and vinegar yield a deep yellow oil which is a remedial rub for aches and pains and is also mildly insecticide. This herb, in muslin bags, is placed in linen and clothes closets against moths.

▣ Dose: One teaspoon daily. Or, finely minced, mixed into a pill with thick honey and used against worms.

Scabious, field

Scabiosa arvensis. Dipsacaceae

Found in fields and on banks. Also cultivated in gardens. Leaves are wavy and rather poppy-form. Flowers are solitary, rather daisy-type, borne on round stems, usually purple, very honey-scented. A favorite of the Gypsies, one of its names being "Gypsy rose." The whole herb is used.

❁ Use, internal: Very blood-cleansing and antiseptic. Treatment of all skin ailments, all female ailments, heart weakness and disease. In old times, used against venereal disease. (Internal dosing and external application.)

❀ Use, external: A brew of the *roots*, used cold, will cure old sores and gatherings. A brew of the whole herb, including the root, thickened with borax, will remove dandruff from the head.

▣ Dose: Of a handful of the flowers infused in two cups of wine, two tablespoons morning and night.

Sea holly

Eryngium maritimum. Umbelliferae

Found along seacoasts. Leaves are spiked, stiff, silver-grey with delicate blue veins and tints. Flowers are terminal, dense and of an intense blue, honey-scented.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of liver ailments, chest ailments, glandular deficiencies and disorders, constipation. A nerve tonic and general tonic. The Arabs eat the young shoots, lightly boiled. The roots are also edible and the Arabs candy them as a delicacy. Rich in minerals, especially silica.

❀ Use, external: The cut herb can be piled around trees to protect them against vermin.

▣ Dose: One root lightly boiled or baked, finely sliced and eaten in the daily salad.

Plate 13. 1. Scabious 2. Sea Holly 3. Shepherd's Purse
4. Skullcap 5. Sloe 6. Snowdrop

SEA LAVENDER

Limonium species. Plumbaginaceae

Found along muddy shores and in marshes. Leaves are finely pleated and broken-edged, dry and membraneous. Flowers are also dry, in corymbose panicles, of a pale lavender color and faintly honey-scented. They are sometimes flecked with white.

Its name is derived from the word "to stop," and alludes to its strong astringent powers.

❁ Use, internal: To treat all forms of hemorrhage, dysentery, diarrhea, bed-wetting.

❀ Use, external: As an astringent wound herb. Statice was much used on the battlefields of Britain in ancient days, and the Gypsies still use it to stem bleeding.

▣ Dose: Steep a handful of the flowers in a quart of cider, and take two tablespoons night and morning. (Cider is also an astringent in dysentery.)

Externally: Merely crush the flowers and apply direct to wounds.

SENNA

Cassis acutifolia. Leguminosae

Found on open plains. Leaves are beanlike. Flowers pea-form of various colors, producing flat pods. Senna contains special acids, gums and sugars.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of constipation, including chronic form. To cleanse the system during fasting and in all fevers. For catarrhal ailments, jaundice, obesity, faulty menstruation, worms. One of the most powerful laxatives in the herbal kingdom and the one that I advise most often in my herbal treatments. It tones and restores the digestive system as well as very thoroughly cleansing it.

▣ Dose: For an adult person an average of eight to ten large senna pods (the kind sold in pharmacies under the name of Alexandrian senna pods), to three-quarters cup of cold water.

Soak the pods for approximately seven hours. Take nightly until the bowels are thoroughly clean.

The griping pains which are typical of treatment with senna are caused by the laxative breaking down hard adhesions in the bowels. These pains are only brief whilst the laxative is working, and can be much reduced by the addition of a pinch of powdered ginger to every cupful of the laxative infusion.

Shepherd's purse

Capsella bursa-pastoris. Cruciferae

Found in waste places and as a weed in cultivated fields. Leaves are tiny, like the rest of this herb, and dark. Flowers are also tiny, white, set in cross form. The seed pods are the distinguishing features, as they resemble the old-fashioned leather sling purses of shepherds. The herb is also called "shepherd's heart," and the seed pods do resemble a heart in shape. It has strong astringent and antiseptic powers out of keeping with its insignificance. Its special use is an emergency first aid where there is heavy bleeding. It is also a good general tonic with a pleasing peppery taste.

❁ Use, internal: To check hemorrhages and bleeding from deep wounds, especially bleeding from nose or lungs. To lessen over-heavy menstruation. Also a remedy for diarrhea, dysentery, kidney disorders, ear ailments.

❀ Use, external: For complete wound treatment, the French Gypsy method is to bathe the wounds with a strong brew of the whole herb, then plug with clean cobwebs. I cannot define a "clean cobweb" but I can report successes. To treat the ears: a teaspoon of a warmed brew is dropped into both ears, and the base of each ear gently massaged.

▣ Dose: A small handful chewed night and morning. Or a strong Standard Brew, using a heaped teaspoon of the herb to every cupful of water. Take two tablespoons three times daily. Take every few hours in hemorrhage treatment, or give a douche with the brew, used cold, or apply cloths soaked in the cold brew.

SKULLCAP

Scutellaria galericulata. Labiatae

Found in low-lying meadows and by streams. Leaves are crenate and oblong. Flowers are rather large, downy and bright blue. The peculiar form of the calyx gives the plant its Latin name (*"scutella,"* a shield). Another common name is "mad-dog weed," giving indication of the herb's use in former days against rabies.

❁ Use, internal: A supreme nerve remedy with great sedative powers. Has cured cases of insanity which no other medicine had improved. Also used to give natural sleep to morphine addicts, especially when combined with lime blossom (linden), catnip and hops.Treatment of all nervous disorders, including fits, epilepsy, convulsions, chorea, delirium tremens. Also for general excitability, wakefulness, headache.

❀ Use, external: Treatment of bites of poisonous insects. Also for sterility, used internally and externally.

▦ Dose: A Standard Brew of the whole herb. Take a wineglass morning and night, sweetened with honey.

Externally: Use the Standard Brew as a lotion or douche.

SLOE (BLACK THORN)

Prunus spinosa. Rosaceae

Found in hedgerows and copses. Leaves are small, plumlike and dark. Flowers are white, rose-form, fragrant, and give small, dark, plum-like fruits, very sharp and strongly astringent. The flowers are amongst the first to appear in the early spring; the blossoms whiten the hedges in England very early, sometimes before the last snows have gone. The flowers, fruits and bark are all used.

❁ Use, internal: *Sloe flowers* are gently laxative and vermifuge; treatment of all fevers, blood disorders, constipation, lack of appetite, worms. *Sloe fruits* are a tonic astringent; treatment of all fevers, skin ailments, dropsy. Gypsies ripen the fruits, and render them sweeter by burying them in straw-lined pits deep in the ground, for several months. *Sloe bark* is antispasmodic and sedative; treats nervous disorders, twitchings, whooping cough.

▣ Dose: Of the *flowers*, eat a handful every morning. Of the *fruits*, eat three or four, grated into honey to lessen their bitterness and the unpleasant tartness in the mouth. Take in the early morning. Of the *bark*, shave finely and make a brew of one tablespoon to one cup of cold water. Bring to the boil, simmer for several minutes, allow to steep for four hours, sweeten with honey and take a tablespoon of the brew three times daily before meals.

Snowdrop

Galanthus nivalis. Amaryllidaceae

Found in shady and damp places, especially woodlands. Leaves are slender, narrow, stalkless. Flowers are drooping, white, frail, lilylike, marked with green honey guides, fragrant. Flowers and bulbs used, *externally only*.

❀ Use, external: Treats frostbite, chilblains; a friction for circulatory ailments. A lotion of crushed flowers whitens the skin.

▣ Dose: Slice up three or four bulbs, steep them in a cup of light beer, apply as a lotion. For frostbite add a heaped teaspoon of powdered cayenne pepper to every cup of snowdrop beer.

Soapwort

Saponaria officinalis. Caryophyllaceae

Found along roadsides, also growing close to cottages, where it is welcomed on account of its pleasant and fragrant flowers and also for its usefulness. Leaves are oval, shiny, fragile. Flowers are pale pink, crinkled, usually double, and sweetly scented. Common name, especially in America, is "bouncing Bet."

This plant yields a peculiar mucilaginous juice, which in water or alcohol resembles soap in solution, and can be used instead of soap. It is the element *saponin* that imparts the foaming and cleansing properties. Leaves and root are used.

❁ Use, internal: Herbalists employ this herb internally in treatment of liver ailments and asthma. Personally I would advise *external use only*.

❀ Use, external: Treatment of inflamed and discharging areas of the body, including leucorrhea, gonorrhea, erysipelas. As a rub for stiff joints, rheumatism, arthritis and cramps.

Also as a soap substitute. Even in modern times, this plant is much used in expensive toilet articles, such as hair shampoos and hand lotions. And when the way of life of the American Indians is discussed, it is commonly mentioned that the Indians used for their washing a lathery substance produced from the leaves of a plant. ("Bouncing Bet!") The roots are also used to remove stains and for washing woolens.

▣ Dose: A decoction of the finely shaved root, either in water as a Standard Brew, or a tablespoonful steeped in light beer overnight. Employ cold as a lotion, douche or rub.

Sorrel

Rumex acetosa, R. acetosella. Polygonaceae

Found on wasteland and in fields. Leaves are arrow-shaped and very acid-tasting, flowers are reddish and grow in tall spikes; sometimes the flower spikes are of green or brown color. The whole plant is very cooling, its acid quality being beneficial to the human body. Also called "sour grass," it is an old-fashioned salad herb.

❁ Use, internal: Sorrel is highly medicinal and is used with benefit for blood, kidney and liver disorders, and for all fevers. Treatment of impure blood, boils, and eczema. Also inflammation of the kidneys, gravel in kidneys, jaundice and all liver complaints, for internal ulcers of the digestive tract or elsewhere.

A few leaves are added to the salad for their blood cooling effect; also they may be cooked in the same way as spinach and served with a pinch of salt and a little butter. The leaves are also used to curdle milk and make junket.

❀ Use, external: To cleanse sweaty skin, and to cure all types of skin eruptions and festering sores. A cold poultice is good for tumors, abscesses and boils.

Oxalic acid, formerly known as "salts of sorrel" was once used as a stain remover, especially for difficult stains such as iron mold. This acid is in all parts of the plant.

▣ Dose: Eat four or five leaves once or twice daily. Eat further as a boiled vegetable. Of a Standard Brew, several tablespoons three times daily, sweetened with honey. For junket-making, the leaves and stems are well crushed to express their juice, or a strong decoction is made from the leaves, using some heat.

Externally: Apply the fresh leaves pounded into a pulp and macerated in milk or water. Make also a poultice of the fresh leaves; use cold.

Southernwood

Artemisia abrotanum. Compositae

Found on sunny hillsides. Leaves are conspicuous, hoary, feathery, grey-green and of sweet and pungent scent. Flowers are in slender racemes and green-yellow color. Also much cultivated in herb gardens. The whole plant contains a bitter principle in the form of an oil called *absinthol*, which possesses highly antiseptic properties; also vermifuge and insecticide like other herbs of the Artemisia group.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of all female ailments and ailments of newborn infants (Artemis, or Diana the huntress, was the Greek goddess who watched over women and children and guarded them at the time of birth). Treats complaints of bladder and kidneys. Used as a vermifuge.

❀ Use, external: As a hair wash and lotion, especially good against diseases of the scalp and parasites. Also to cleanse the skin of lice and their eggs. To keep moths and other harmful insects from clothing and linen.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the leaves, a small wineglass morning and night, sweetened with honey.

Externally: Use a stronger brew, or the powder from the dried herb. To repel moths, lay sprigs of the plant amongst clothing.

Plate 14. 1. Southernwood 2. Sow-Thistle 3. Speedwell
4. Sphagnum Moss 5. Sweet Cecily 6. Tansy

Sow thistle

Sonchus arvensis. Compositae

Found on wasteland, in gardens and in cultivated fields. Leaves have triangular lobes and prickly edges. Flowers are small, yellow, and of thistle-form. Legend says that hunted hares when hard-pressed by hounds, will stay to snatch a few mouthfuls of this herb to cool their blood and succor their bursting hearts. A common name for this plant is "hare's lettuce." The whole plant is very rich in minerals.

❁ Use, internal: Very refrigerant, therefore used in ailments of the blood and in all fevers. Treatment of all skin disorders, acid stomach, disorders of the intestinal tract. To allay heart palpitations, tonify the heart, and for anemia. The young hearts of this plant are eaten as a salad herb by Gypsies everywhere and by peasants of the Swiss and French Alps, also by the Arabs.

❀ Use, external: The white milk expressed from the leaves and stems makes a good application for sunburn.

▣ Dose: A handful of the young leaves to be eaten daily. Give more often for treatment of heart disorders. If the leaves have coarsened, trim off the prickly edges.

Speedwell

Veronica officinalis. Scrophulariaceae

Found in pastures and copses. Leaves are tiny, rough, serrated. Flowers are small, delicate, pale blue and marked with a white eye. This is one more minute herb which has remarkable medicinal powers out of proportion to its size.

❁ Use, internal: Speedwell removes excess mucus from the body, soothes all internal tissues, and provides a tonic tea much used by the Gypsies everywhere. Treats cough, bronchial asthma, pulmonary catarrh, pleurisy, tuberculosis, ulcerated lungs. Also dysentery, jaundice. As a tea, the herb is highly tonic and blood cleansing and a stimulant of the gastric juices.

❀ Use, external: For all skin inflammations, eruptions, ulcers, rashes. For all eye ailments, to improve the sight.

▣ Dose: A handful of the herb eaten raw once daily. Of a Standard Brew, a wineglass morning and night, at least three times daily in serious lung troubles.

Externally: Standard Brew as a gargle for relieving catarrh, as a cold lotion for application to the skin and for bathing the eyes.

Sphagnum moss

Sphagnum cymbifolium. Musci

Found in damp places, especially peaty moors. In form this handsome moss is rather like edelweiss. Leaves are soft, ferny, and peculiar for their water-storing properties. Their color is greenish yellow, sometimes orange-stained through the high iodine content. It is a plant of the *Bryophyta* group, which is between the ferns and the seaweeds.

Sphagnum is able to absorb many times its own weight of whatever moisture it is in contact with, when rendered into a dry state — which is easily done by gathering and exposing it to sunlight and wind. (When drying sphagnum, care must be taken that it is not carried away by the wind, for it dries to a feathery lightness.) Sphagnum moss is a base of that important fuel, peat.

❀ Use, external: Its chief use is as a surgical dressing, as it is very antiseptic, cooling and soothing, and makes excellent bandage material. Partly dry and then soak in a brew of a strongly antiseptic herb such as garlic, elder blossom, wormwood, or rue for stronger effect. Sphagnum moss is much used by Gypsies and American Indians for skin and wound treatments. Soak in beer for burns and scalds. The American Indian women also used this moss as sanitary pads and as lining for the portable cradles of their infants, who need not therefore wear uncomfortable diapers.

Stonecrop (biting stonecrop)

Sedum acre. Crassulaceae

Found on rocky and sandy soil, especially in coastal areas. Also on old walls. Leaves are in rosettes, succulent and upstanding.

Flowers are also somewhat succelent, starry, yellow in color.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of nervous ailments, epilepsy, chorea, convulsions, hysteria.

❁ Use, external: As a lotion or salve (the herb pounded into melted cold cream or vegetable fat) for old swellings, abscesses, boils, cysts, tumors, and obstinate gatherings in the skin tissues including those of the malignant nature.

Strawberry (wild strawberry)

Fragaria vesca. Roseaceae

Found on shady banks and in woodlands, likes rich soil. Also widely cultivated in gardens, both private and market. Leaves are dark green, glossy, fan shaped. Flowers white, rose-form, with prominent yellow center. Fruits are small, round, red, very juicy berries. The whole plant is very refrigerant, and also highly mineral rich and antiseptic.

❁ Use, internal: The *fruits* are prized above all others by the American Indians, and are cooling, strengthening, healing, also mildly vermifuge. The *leaves* and *root* are also medicinal, very cooling and mildly laxative. The leaves are a proven aid in preventing miscarriage; they also regulate faulty and irregular menstruation. They make an excellent tea for the feverish. Fruits and/or leaves treat impure blood, thin blood, anemia, lowered vitality, feeble nerves, lack of appetite, all bowel disorders, stomach disorders, liver diseases, fevers, undue sweating.

The fruit alone is a powerful nerve tonic. Eat as much as desired, as often as desired. The season of cultivated garden strawberries is a short one; wild woodland strawberries enjoy a longer season and are richer in iron. Eat as many as possible and preserve some in melted honey with a little lemon juice added. There are some people who after eating strawberries develop a "strawberry rash;" this is only evidence of the cleansing action of the strawberries, which drive excess acid from the system more speedily than the body can expel it by other channels.

❁ Use, external: The fruit may be used externally for cleansing

the teeth and for removing discoloration and other blemishes from the skin.

▣ Dose: Of the leaf tea, Standard Brew, a small wineglass morning and night. *Externally*: Use the brew as a soothing lotion for eczema, sore eyes, styes on the eyelids.

Summer savory

Satureja hortensis. Labiatae

Found on banks in sunny places, likes sandy soil. Leaves are small, narrow, fan-shaped, very numerous; flower heads are thick clusters, calyx grey, petals dark purple, hooded. The whole plant is highly aromatic and has a scent rather like a mingling of lavender and apples: indeed a summer savory!

❁ Use, internal: Similar to most of the aromatics, especially of the Labiatae family, summer savory is used as an antiseptic and general tonic; also as a tonic for those who are frigid or lacking in virility. Treats all fevers, especially those of an infectious kind. Sweetens the breath, stomach and intestines. As a nervine. Also as a tonic for the reproductive system; to regulate irregular menstruation. Treatment of wind in infants, diarrhea, colds. Used as a pot herb, to flavor salads, vinegar, soups.

❀ Use, external: Flowering sprigs are placed in clothes cupboards and linen closets to repel moths.

▣ Dose: A few sprigs eaten in salad or soups. Of a Standard Brew, a small cupful morning and night.

Sweet cecily

Osmorhiza longistylis. Umbelliferae

Found in hedges, on edges of woods, also on mountainsides, cultivated in gardens. The leaves are pale green, feathery and with a most sweet scent. Flowers are white and in large umbels. The whole plant is useful, from the roots to the seeds.

❁ Use, internal: As a tonic cordial, to restore appetite, strengthen the nerves. The American Indians eat the pungent

seeds and roots, and use the roots as a bait to catch wild horses. The plant is mildly laxative, especially the seeds.

❀ Use, external: The roots, steamed and mashed, as a poultice for boils. The foliage is put into linen closets to impart a pleasant scent to the contents. In France the dried plant is used for stuffing pillows.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the foliage, a wineglass morning and night. One or two roots, or some seeds (salted) can be roasted and eaten.

Sweet flag (calamus)

Acorus calamus. Acoraceae

Found in marshy places and alongside streams and rivers; will also grow in quite deep water. Leaves are distinctive, being reed-like but having wavy edges. Flowers are rush-brown. A common name is "sweet sedge," for it is a scented plant, especially the root. This root (actually a rhizome) has inner tissue of a pinky white shade, and is of spongy texture and very aromatic; it is rich in food values and is highly medicinal.

❁ Use, internal: As a nutritive tonic, for invalids, tubercular cases, and in the weaning of infants. The chief value of the root of sweet flag is its influence over the whole digestive system, sweetening, purifying and strengthening, improving the digestive juices and quelling fermentation. Will correct over-acid condition of the whole body. Treatment of gastritis, dysentery, mild and chronic constipation, lack of appetite and general debility.

❀ Use, external: For sores, wounds, inflammations, burns and scalds.

▣ Dose: Of a small teaspoon of the powdered root mixed with two tablespoons of lightly roasted wheaten flour, and mixed into a gruel with milk, and sweetened with honey, a spoonful or more at midday and evening, after meals. For weaning infants give twice daily. (*Publisher's Caution*: Honey can be dangerous for infants under one year old.)

Plate 15. 1. Thyme 2. Toad Flax 3. Valerian
4. Vervain 5. Watercress 6. Wood Betony

Sweet gale

Myrica gale. Myricaceae

Found on moorlands and on boggy wastes. Leaves are greyish, pointed, sweetly scented. Flowers are pinkish and the fruits are waxy berries of a bright orange color. The New Forest Gypsies taught me the use of this charming plant. They gather the leaves for the making of home-brewed beer. In remote times leaves of sweet gale (or "bog myrtle," as the Forest Gypsies call it) were often used along with hops in the brewing of beer.

❁ Use, internal: A general tonic and a wound herb. Wild deer and ponies seek it out for its tonic properties. Treats general debility, weak nerves, lack of appetite, poor sleep. To remedy mental depression, lassitude, poor memory.

❀ Use, external: Leaves are applied as a hot poultice to cauterize wounds.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the leaves, a wineglass in the early morning, sweetened with honey to counteract bitterness.

Externally: Pulp up several handfuls of leaves, heat slowly in a little hot water or beer until softened, apply hot to the wound.

Tansy

Tanacetum vulgare. Compositae

Found along roadsides and on wastelands. Leaves are dark, ferny and of pungent scent. Flowers are small, brilliant yellow, in peculiar flat discs, borne in clusters, of pungent scent. The whole plant has a camphor-type odor and is hot and peppery to taste. A highly medicinal plant, and a favorite of the English Gypsies who frequently name their children Tansy. It is one of the most mineral-rich of all herbs and contains many remarkable substances, including stearin, gallic acid, gum, precipitate of lime, bitter resin. It yields a bright yellow coloring matter which in former days was used in confectionery, for tansy buns and tansy sugar rock. It is almost a cure-all herb, having so many medicinal values.

❁ Use, internal: Tonic, soothing, nervine, vermifuge. An excellent general tonic, used in convalescence from enervating diseases; against failing appetite, nausea, morning sickness, threatened abortion. Also all fevers, most digestive complaints, kidney ailments, jaundice, dropsy. To cure menstrual disorders, strengthen the veins and arteries, also for high blood pressure, heart weaknesses. A remedy for varicose veins.

❀ Use, external: Apply to enlarged, knotted or varicose veins. Treats all swellings, tumors, bruises, earaches, toothaches, styes and eye inflammations.

▣ Dose: This is a strong herb and can only be taken in small doses. Of a Standard Brew, using only one small teaspoon of finely cut herb to every cup of water, a tablespoon three times daily before meals. The dried powdered flower heads can be added to flour for coloring (one teaspoon to a pound of flour) giving a tangy flavor.

Externally: Use the Standard Brew as a lotion, hot, wringing out a cotton cloth in the brew and applying where needed. (Renew the hot cloths as they cool.)

Teasel

Dipsacus fullorum, *D. sylvestris*. Dipsacaceae

Found in waste places and on hedgebanks. Not a common plant. Leaves are large and serrated, stems are very prickly (to prevent theft, by undesirable insects, of the precious water held in the hollows of the upper conate leaves). Flowers somewhat resemble the thistle heads of the Compositae order, and are in long, oval, tightly packed heads of pale purple shading to white. The flower heads are held in a thorny receptacle once much used in dressing cloth, the hooked scales being admirably placed by nature for that very purpose. The plant derives its name from a word meaning "to be thirsty," alluding to the water stored in the leaves which is used to trap winged insects, which the plant absorbs.

❀ Use, external: Teasel water is a wonderful remedy for eye ailments, styes, whitlows on fingers, and to erase wrinkles from the face. I learnt the use of teasel water from Somerset Gypsies.

▣ Dose: Not specific. Use as much teasel water as one is fortunate enough to find and collect!

Thrift

Armeria vulgaris. Plumbaginaceae

Found along seashores and on mountainsides. Leaves are short, reedy, grooved. Honey-scented flowers are in round heads of pale pink (sometimes almost white), set amongst brown scales. They are a fine bee food, as well as tonic and restoring to humans.

❁ Use, internal: Nervine, tonic, alleviates depression.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of flowers, a wineglass once daily.

Thyme

Thymus serpyllum, *T. vulgaris.* Labiatae

Found on heaths and on sunny banks. Leaves are small, flat dark green and very sweetly aromatic. Flowers are in whorls, and are tiny, lilac in color, and also very aromatic. This is a most valuable plant and has been used in medicine since the very earliest days. It yields an essential oil, thymol, which is found in orthodox preparations such as disinfectants, dentifrices, and hair lotions.

❁ Use, internal: A powerful antiseptic and general tonic. Treats all digestive complaints, including inflammation of the liver, bad breath, flatulence. Treats whooping cough, sore throat, asthma, sinus ailments, rickets. Treats all nervous derangements, including hysteria, nervous indigestion, nightmares, headaches. To control excessive menstrual flow, to expel retained afterbirth, to treat inflamed or diseased uterus, mastitis and all swellings of the breasts. A safe remedy for worms, even in infants. Used to promote perspiration in fevers.

The dried and powdered herb provides the well-known condiment of the Arabs, Za'atar. In the Balearic Isles, thyme is used to preserve dried fruits.

❀ Use, external: As a hot fomentation for abscesses, boils, and all kinds of swellings and gatherings.

▣ Dose: Eat some sprigs of thyme raw, fresh, in the daily salad, rubbing the leaves off the stems. Prepare Za'atar by powdering thyme and mixing with roasted sesame and coriander seeds and salt; eat with olive oil on slices of bread. Of a Standard Brew, take a wineglass morning and night.

Toadflax

Linaria vulgaris. Scrophulariaceae

Found in waste places, fields and amongst growing corn. Leaves are small and flat, flowers are in racemes of yellow and orange marked white and are of familiar snapdragon form.

❁ Use, internal: This herb has powerful dissolvent properties, and is therefore used to treat obstructions in all parts of the body, including the intestines, kidneys, and bladder. It also provides one of the best jaundice remedies known to the herbalist. Treats lymphatic disorders and dropsy.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the whole herb, two tablespoons three times daily.

Traveler's Joy (*Virgin's Bower*)

Clematis virginiana. Ranunculaceae

Found as a climbing plant in hedgerows and woodlands. Leaves are vine-shaped, bright green, turning attractive reds and yellows in the autumn. Flowers are insignificant, pale yellow, producing masses of downy seed material which covers the hedges with grey feathery billows (which explains the popular name of "old man's beard"). Its botanical name indicates its resemblance to shoots of a vine.

❁ Use, internal: The leaves and flowers are stimulating and tonic. In olden times, wayfaring people used to pluck traveler's joy from the hedges and use it as a tea, or, when infused in their bottles of ale, as a "pick-me-up."

❀ Use, external: Treats all aches and ailments of the wayfarer, from headache and inflamed eyes to blistered and aching

feet and bites and stings of insects. For the once prevalent ringworm, a strong brew mixed with half a lemon to two tablespoons of the brew was used. As a headache cure, a headcloth was soaked in the cold tea and bound over the brow (headaches were inevitable with long hours on the dusty roads in the age of foot or horseback travel). The herb was used for treatment of all kinds of sores, including travel blisters on the feet, saddle blisters on buttocks, festering bites from flies, and as a lotion to remove dust from travelers' eyes. The leaves, used as a poultice, had some repute as an external treatment for tumors.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the leaves or flowers or both, a small cupful, sweetened with honey, to be taken to allay pain.

Externally: As a lotion and as a poultice. Steep a cloth in the brew and apply cold. Rinse the eyes with the cold brew. Place fresh leaves of traveler's joy inside the shoes, within the socks, to prevent blisters during long travels on foot.

Valerian

Valeriana officinalis. Valerianaceae .

Found on sunny riverbanks and on old walls. Its leaves are bright green, opposite, compound, shiny. Flowers are in corymbs of rose or white. Its healing virtues have given valerian the common name of "all-heal." The root is the medicinal part of this important herb.

The roots are perennial and should be allowed to be at least two years of age before being lifted. The taste of the root is rather nauseating and its odor unpleasant This scent makes valerian useful as a rat bait, as they come to it eagerly. There is *valerianic* acid in the roots. Also starch, balsamic resin, mucilage, albumen, a substance *valerianin*, and many minerals; particularly there is a rich silica content. All these ingredients of the root make it a most important nerve remedy.

❁ Use, internal: A supreme remedy for all types of nerve trouble. Treats epilepsy (the American Indian herbalists believe that if epileptic fits will not yield to this herb they are incurable),

hysteria, chorea, convulsions in children, paralysis. Also for chronic constipation, worms, malaria and other recurrent fevers. Properly used, valerian is good for the heart. In over-large doses it causes headache, mental agitation including delusions and much restlessness. It is said that Hitler was a valerian addict.

❀ Use, external: As a soothing and strengthening agent. Valerian (especially the expressed oil in solution in alcohol) is used to massage paralyzed or cramped limbs, swollen joints, swollen arteries and veins. The brew for the healing of rashes, pimples and sores.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, using one root finely sliced to one and a half cups of water (do not heat to boiling, only slow, gentle heating is permissible for valerian), two tablespoons three times daily before meals. Take more frequently for severe fits or convulsions. Sweetening with honey and adding a few drops of an aromatic oil such as oil of peppermint or cloves disguises the unpleasant taste of valerian.

Verbena, lemon-scented

Lippia citriodora. Verbenaceae

A cultivated garden shrub, very typical of Mediterranean gardens (especially the old-fashioned ones) and of the Middle East. Sometimes found wild as a stray. In good soil it can grow quite high, almost into a tree. Planted beneath verandas to give shade and to diffuse its almost divine fragrance. Distinguished by its bright green, narrow leaves, dotted with glands which contain the sweet-smelling oil that gives this herb its special fragrance. Its flowers also have the fragrance and are borne in terminal spikes, in small lacy wands of whitish grey, silver or very pale blue. (Its scent can be described as lemonlike, but yet more fragrant than the true lemon tree.)

In Mediterranean countries this herb is called "herba Luisa" after Maria Luisa, the royal herbalist whose favorite herb it was. It is also a great favorite of mine and I plant it as close to my door as possible wherever I live long enough to make a garden. In the

Canary Islands I was interested to hear that it is so esteemed it is called "la Reina Luisa," the queen herb. There it is famed as a remedy for toothache (as I shall describe below) and is often found as a potted herb, placed outside windows to waft its sweet fragrance into the home. Its strong perfume makes it a popular tea herb, and it is also esteemed as a powerful, nonaddictive sedative.

❁ Use, internal: A general tonic. Important nerve remedy, strangely it is both a stimulant and a calmative. For sleeplessness, nervous spasms. As a soothing tea, especially favored by infants and the elderly. Soothe aches of stomach and intestines. In fact, this herb is so very kind to the nerves, and is such a general soother, that in the Balearic Isles I found that orthodox vets were prescribing it for curing colic pains in cattle and horses.

❀ Use, external: In sachets for placing under pillows and in clothes closets where it also gives some protection against moths. It is popular in babies' cradles, and my children certainly enjoyed the sweet scent. As a remedy for aching teeth and ears.

▣ Dose: As a tea in any quantity desired. Pills can also be made of the fresh or dried herb finely minced and rolled in thick honey.

Externally: A pulp is made of the leaves, preferably fresh not dried, and this is spread onto a pad of cotton wool made very hot by being dipped into boiling water and squeezed as dry as possible. The hot herbal pads are then held tightly against the aching teeth or ears. If preferred, the cotton wool can be dipped into hot vegetable oil instead of water.

Vervain

Verbena officinalis. Verbenaceae

Found on dry, barren lands. Leaves are spare and opposite, greyish, on square stems. Flowers are small, pale lilac, hooded. Long considered as a cure-all, vervain, along with red clover, is known as God's gift to man. A favorite of the great healer, Hippocrates, this herb has even been worshipped by the peasants of Greece, Italy and by the Druids. In the plague years, vervain was one of the herbs recommended as a safeguard.

❁ Use, internal: Beneficial in all ills, but especially valuable for all fevers. Treats all infectious ailments, also nervous disorders including paralysis and mental stress (excellent for averting convulsions). For liver complaints, gallstones, weak heart, and as a vermifuge. For pulmonary ailments, including asthma, pneumonia, tuberculosis, whooping cough. An esteemed fertility herb.

❀ Use, external: For weak, sore or inflamed eyes, sore mouths and throats, ulcers of the mouth and gums, and all external sores.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, a wineglass morning and night.

Vine, wild grape

Vitis vinifera. Vitaceae

Found on sunny banks and trailing over rocks, also climbing on trees in woodlands, in its natural habitat. Leaves are five-lobed (like cool, green, healing human hands), tender, shining, and of a brilliant green. Flowers are green-yellow, fragrant, gummy. The fruits are the precious grapes, symbol of health and fertility through the ages, a supreme food and medicinal herb. The juice of the fruits of this shrub, taken fresh or fermented into wine, has graced the board since people first gathered to feast and celebrate!

❁ Use, internal: General tonic for the whole system. When the human body has become sick almost beyond reasonable hope of recovery, there is still, to my mind, one recourse: for the patient to retire to the neighborhood of some vineyard where grapes are cultivated by natural methods (that is without artificial fertilizers, chemical sprays, and heavy irrigation), and there to follow a grape cure, living only on the fruit (with a few vine leaves and tendrils also) and drinking only pure water and perhaps fresh goat or sheep milk. Some cases of cancer have been treated with the leaves, tendrils, and fruits, but there must be much more evidence and many more trials before one is entitled to make strong claims here. I should like, though, to learn more about this.

Treats rickets, anemia, infertility, fevers, impure blood, eczema, lymphatic ailments, dysentery, constipation. Leaves of the vine are much used in Greek, Turkish and other cuisines.

The dried *fruits* (raisins) act both as a laxative and a cure for dysentery. Grape wine is an excellent vehicle for other herbs which may be steeped in it.

❀ Use, external: The *leaves* (in a strong brew) as a hair tonic and wound application. The *juice* to dissolve internal growths, especially in uterus and breast.

▣ Dose: As a general tonic, eat a few tendrils raw daily. Eat as much of the fruit as desired during the grape season; chew some of the pips. When grapes are out of season, take the fresh juice preserved with honey, or take some wine. Of a Standard Brew of the leaves (and a few tendrils), a cup morning and night, sweetened with honey.

A Greek peasant recipe: Stuff vine leaves with boiled rice and white cheese and thick slices of olives. Sew up with cotton thread, and bake lightly until the leaves are soft. (On the island of Crete, the flowers of squashes are used the same way.)

For use as a laxative: Soak overnight a dozen raisins in a half-cup of water sweetened with one teaspoon honey. To cure diarrhea, eat six to eight dry raisins every two hours, during the day. Make the night a long fasting period.

Violet, sweet

Viola odorata. Violaceae

Found along shady lanesides and in woodlands. Leaves are heart-shaped, dark green. Flowers are viola-shaped, deep purple or white, very sweetly and strongly perfumed. The flowers and leaves are the medicinal parts.

❀ Use, internal: Used internally and externally for treatment of tumors, boils, abscesses, pimples, swollen glands and malignant growths, liver and kidney ailments, gallstones. To calm deranged nerves, improve weak memory, soothe the restless.

Violet *flowers* and *leaves* are mucilaginous and powerfully dissolvent. They have long been used, as many herbals describe, in internal and external treatment of cancer. Violet *root* is mildly aperient. Violet has a very soothing effect on the head area, taken

internally as a tea and applied externally as a cold pack.

Violets also provide a delicious sweetmeat.

Sugared Violets: dip whole flowers in a mixture of melted cane sugar, lemon juice and eggwhite. The sugar coating should set hard when dropped into cold water.

❀ Use, external: The leaves, crushed, are employed as poultices to treat skin cancers and growths. Having emollient properties, they are used also for skin lotions and salves.

▣ Dose: Take a half-dozen *leaves* or so, raw in the salad; the *flowers* can also be eaten raw, twice daily with the midday and evening meal. A strong tea can be made of the leaves and flowers, using two teaspoons of violet to a large cup of water.

Externally: Apply the leaves raw, binding them over the area to be treated. Or macerate the leaves and flowers and mix into a base of melted cold cream or vegetable fat, and apply warmed.

Watercress

Nasturtium officinale. Cruciferae

Found alongside and within flowing streams of sweet water, also by springs. (The love of this plant for pure water fosters the belief that wherever it grows the water is safe to drink; in these days of water pollution, this may no longer be true.) Leaves consist of many leaflets, of a brilliant green, and with biting, tangy taste. Flowers are tiny, white, borne in corymbs. This is an important antiseptic herb and is also extremely tonic. It is one more herb with an old reputation for cancer relief and cure, and is used for this purpose by Turkish peasants. It is extremely rich in all important minerals and is therefore in much favor as a blood tonic and anemia remedy.

❀ Use, internal: Treatment of weak and impure blood, anemia, rickets, of all nervous ailments, lack of appetite, weak eyesight, failing or scanty supply of breast milk. To strengthen the heart, cure infertility. Treatment of all internal tumors and cysts including uterine cysts. For rheumatic ailments, stiff back, and stiff joints in any part of the body.

▣ Dose: Eat as much watercress as can be obtained, raw, in the daily salad. There is no better salad herb available to man. An old name for watercress was "poor-man's bread." When wheaten bread could not be afforded there was always watercress. The raw seeds, a tablespoon as a dose, taken fasting in the morning, are a cure for worm infestation. In winter, or whenever watercress is freely available, it is the season for making the good Provencal watercress soup. The cress is cooked with milk, garlic, butter and cayenne pepper.

Two handfuls of the raw herb eaten daily cannot fail to be beneficial; larger quantities can be taken if desired. A good way of taking this biting hot herb is to chop it finely, steep in a cup of cold milk, then drink the watercress-infused milk and eat the residue of the herb. Can also be finely chopped and forked into fresh white cheese. *Externally*: apply the fresh, crushed herb direct to the place requiring treatment, and bandage in position.

Wheat

Triticum species and *Agropyrum* species. Poaceae

Found in fields and on riverbanks and under cultivation. Leaves are typical grass-form, bright green, shiny. Spikelets are upright; the grains are rounded, fat, without awns, and turn dark gold when ripe. Wheat is one of the most nutritive of all plants; it is commonly known as "the staff of life." It is rich in fat and carbohydrates, has some protein, has a high phosphorous and iron content, and is rich in vitamins A, B, and E. The germ (heart) of wheat is a proven vital food and medicine for the human body and an important nerve tonic. The bran (outer skin of the grains) is also highly medicinal and has external as well as internal use.

❁ Use, internal: The *grain* as a nutritive food and tonic for all parts of the body and important brain food. The *germ* (raw) as a digestive and nerve tonic, anemia remedy, and rickets cure. The *bran* as a nerve tonic and gentle laxative.

❀ Use, external: Treats skin ailments.

▣ Dose: Wheat can be eaten raw: merely sprinkle a shallow

dish of the grains with enough cold water to cover them and leave in a sunny (or warm) place until germination (that is, until the grains sprout, usually in two or three days). Then eat as is, or crush, mix with flour, and form into small, flat, cakes, which are lightly baked before eating. Add raw bran to soups or eat it raw, several teaspoons with other food, to cure constipation.

Bran Bath for Curing Skin Ailments: Fill a tub with hot water, stir in a half-pound of bran. Soak. Also use bran as a poultice.

White pond lily

Nymphaea alba. Nymphaeaceae

Found on ponds, lakes and other still waters. Leaves are very large and round, dark green, and float flat on the surface of the water. Flowers are beautiful, large, solitary, rounded of form, sweetly scented and with prominent yellow stamens. The name is from the Greek for "water-nymph," as this lily has the paleness of the nymphs and, like them, inhabits the waters. The root is the part used.

The yellow pond lily (*Nymphaea lutea*, Nymphaeaceae) is also medicinal, with healing virtues similar to those of *Nymphaea alba*. Extolled by that great herbalist of ancient times, Dioscorides. Has the common name of "brandy bottle" from the brandylike scent of its flowers and the shape of its seed vessels, which are like traditional brandy flagons.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of diarrhea, all bowel ailments, also leucorrhea (internally and externally). Expels excess mucus from all parts of the body and reduces internal inflammations. Good in dropsy and kidney disorders. For soothing the bowels; very helpful for infants in this respect. It has given relief when other herbal treatments have failed. Pond lily *root* is very soothing, cooling and astringent, and possesses antiseptic properties.

❁ Use, external: *Pond lily leaves* are sometimes used for binding over wounds or inflamed areas of the skin. A brew as a vaginal douche, gargle for throat ailments, wash for sore mouths and gums, nasal douche for congestion of the nose and nasal pas-

sages. Treats all kinds of inflammations of the skin and genital organs, and all wounds, sores, rashes and sunburn.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of a piece of root about six inches long, shaved into fine pieces, and placed in one cup of cold water, heated gently for five minutes (keeping below boiling point) and then steeped for at least three hours, a tablespoon morning and night, more often in bowel ailments.

Externally: Use the same brew as a douche, gargle, lotion and skin application. Use the leaves raw, straight from the water.

Wintergreen

Pyrola secunda. Ericaceae

Found in woodlands, particularly fir tree woods. A rather shrubby plant. Leaves are oval with serrated edges. Flowers are small and greenish white and quite fragrant. They are borne in racemes and are peculiar in all leaning one way. This herb take its name from the word for a pear tree, as there is supposed to be a resemblance to pear blossom. There are two related American species. One is *Chimaphila umbellata,* a greatly treasured herb of the North American Indians. The whole plant is a powerful diuretic, used in all ailments of the bladder and kidneys. Externally it is one more useful poultice herb. The other is *Gaultheria procumbens*, true wintergreen, which produces an edible berry avidly sought out by the creatures. "Wintergreen" oil (useful against sciatica) comes from *Betula lenta* (sweet birch), however, not wintergreen.

❁ Use, internal: Treats all inflammations and obstructions of the bladder and kidneys. Also dropsy and rheumatism.

❀ Use, external: As a poultice in treatment of boils and ulcers. A solution of the leaves provides a good gargle for infections of the mouth and throat. The extracted oil, mixed with apple cider vinegar (preferably), is a good rub for rheumatic inflammations and swellings, arthritis, stiff or swollen joints, stiff back, muscular pains and all kinds of sprains.

▣ Dose: Of a tea of the leaves alone, or the leaves and flowers, two teaspoons night and morning. *Externally*: As a poultice

merely warm the leaves over hot steam, pulp up and apply where needed. As a gargle and mouthwash, soak the leaves in cider vinegar for twenty-four hours, then dilute the solution with two parts of water to every one of vinegar, and use warm.

Old-fashioned Remedy for Sore Throat and Stiff Neck (very effective): Soak sheets of brown paper in a wintergreen-apple cider vinegar solution, then bandage the prepared paper around the neck. Wear this all night. Two layers of treated paper are generally used. If you use oil of wintergreen, mix one part of oil to six of vinegar, and add one part of cayenne pepper to every part of oil.

Witch hazel

Hamamelis virginiana. Hamamelidaceae

Found in woodlands and by watersides. Leaves resemble the common hazel shrub, but are smaller and have deeper veining. Its flowers are spectacular, being bright yellow with petals of slender spidery form, forming delicate corollas like incurved chrysanthemums. This is one of the sacred herbs of the American Indians, who claim magical healing powers for this beautiful shrub.

❁ Use, internal: It is both refrigerant and astringent. Used internally and externally to check hemorrhages from all parts of the body, including nosebleeds, bleeding from the womb, bleeding after tooth extraction. Also used to check milk leakage from the breasts. For treatment of internal ulcers of the stomach and intestines, for healing internal burns resulting from intake of poisons such as phosphorus, sulfuric acid. More drastic methods will of course precede this healing process.

❁ Use, external: As a douche for treatment of leucorrhea, vaginitis. One of the supreme wound herbs. Difficult to prepare in the home, it is available as an extract in pharmacies. Extract of witch hazel is very popular as a skin tonic and as an application for bruises. Apply extract of witch hazel direct to burns, scalds, cuts, bruises, sore breasts, sore eyes (use in dilution) and for bed sores and blisters, foot blisters, and piles. As a gargle for sore and inflamed throats, and for ulcerated gums and throats.

▣ Dose: A teaspoonful in a half-wineglass of warm water. Or it may be taken on lumps of sugar.

Externally: Apply extract of witch hazel neat. For a douche, two teaspoons of witch hazel extract to two cups of tepid water. For a gargle, a half-teaspoon to a cup of water. To check nose bleeding, sniff similar dilution up the nostrils and retain this for as long as possible. If necessary use double strength. For deep wounds apply on swabs of sphagnum moss or cotton wool.

Wood betony

Stachys officinalis. Labiatae

Found in woods and under dense hedges. Leaves are sparse, serrated, rough, dark. Flowers are tubular, lipped, dark. This rather hairy plant grows several feet high. Its botanical names come from the Gaelic, "*ben*" for head, and "*ton*" meaning good or tonic, and it does possess most powerful influence over the head region.

❁ Use, internal: A true cephalic, much used in the treatment of headache and neuralgia of the head and face; will relieve most pains of this nature. As it opens up congested areas of the liver and spleen, it is a valued remedy for jaundice. Treats all nervous ailments, convulsions, hysterical delirium, fainting. Will also soothe the stomach, cure biliousness and expel worms.

❀ Use, external: For bites and stings of all types (insects and animals), including the poisonous ones.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew of the leaves, a wineglass morning and night. Can also be brewed in port wine, a tablespoon of the herb to a two-cup bottle. Dose, the same.

Woodruff

Asperula odorata. Rubiaceae

Found in woodlands. Leaves are tiny, dark and in whorls. Flowers are in terminal corymbs, and are tiny, white, frail and most sweetly scented. The whole herb is aromatic, and the scent even increases on drying. This is exploited by putting bunches of wood-

ruff in linen closets and similar places. It is a tonic and nervine herb, and despite its tiny size it increases the flow of breast milk. It is one of the tea herbs of the English Gypsies.

❁ Use, internal: Treatment of nervous debility, poor memory, depression, hysteria, frigidity. Also for jaundice, chronic constipation, acid stomach. For all fevers, excellent in childbirth fever. To produce easy flow of milk in women and milk animals.

❀ Use, external: For wounds and ringworm, and as a rub to strengthen wasted limbs.

▣ Dose: Of a handful of the whole herb infused in wine for several days, two tablespoons three times daily before meals. For fevers, a small cupful of the Standard Brew night and morning, more often in childbirth fever.

Externally: Use the Standard Brew as a lotion, except for ringworm, when the herb should be infused in light beer for several days, and the lotion then applied three times daily. As a rub, infuse a handful of herb to two cups of oil (see pages 7-8).

Wood sage

Teucrium scorodonia. Labiatae

Found in shady places. Likes hedgerows and woodlands. Leaves are rough, downy, rather dark , with a slight garlic odor (one of its common names being "garlic sage"). In addition to the garlic scent the plant also has an aroma of hops. Flowers are in spikes, greenish yellow and hooded. It shares with garlic the claim to be the most effective mucus expellent, and has some reputation as a cancer herb, especially when the cancer is external. A very bitter-tasting herb.

❁ Use, internal: Wood sage has been used from ancient times as a blood-cleansing tea. Treatment of boils, blood disorders, skin ailments. For coughs, colds, and breast ailments, especially mastitis. Also for pneumonia, bronchitis, general catarrh. Treats internal tumors, internal inflammations, internal obstructions, rheumatism, and gout.

❀ Use, external: As a poultice for all skin ailments, tumors, mastitis, boils, styes, skin cancer.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, two tablespoons three times a day, sweetened with honey. *Externally*: Use the Standard Brew, unsweetened, as a lotion. For a poultice, use the entire herb.

Wood sorrel

Oxalis acetosella. Oxalidaceae

The only British member of this large family. Found in woodlands and on shady banksides. Leaves are of shamrock form, pale green, frail, and have purple undersides. Flowers are bell-shaped, silvery-white with green or purple veining, and are solitary and very frail. The strong oxalic acid content of this delicate plant gives it its generic name, *acetosella*, meaning "acid" or "sharp." Its powerful medicinal properties are belied by its delicate form.

It is claimed for wood sorrel that it is the original "seamrog" or shamrock of Ireland, a plant to which magic properties are attributed. However, dutch clover has taken over this name nowadays.

There is another form of *Oxalis* with similar leaves, but without the purple shading, and with long-stemmed flowers, not solitary, three or more on a stem of a yellow color. This sorrel has similar medicinal virtues to *acetosella* except for not being quite so blood-cooling.

❁ Use, internal: Powerfully antiseptic and refrigerant, useful in all fevers, especially those producing a hot rash or pimples, and to cleanse an impure bloodstream. Increases flow of urine, and this, combined with its other medicinal virtues, makes it ideal for treatment of ailments and inflammation of the kidneys and bladder, acid urine, and vaginitis. Also treats high blood pressure, varicose veins, hot flushes of the face. Also for menstrual irregularities, diseases of the sexual glands.

Wood sorrel is a favorite of the American Indians. They used to feed the pulped roots to their horses to increase their speed, "to put the North Wind into their hooves." This might be a tip for athletes; the roots of wood sorrel are edible for humans also.

❀ Use, external: For all minor eye ailments. To cool and soothe all skin rashes, wounds, burns, scalds, and inflamed areas in any part

of the body. For the healing of scrofulous ulcers. The expressed juice (with some cucumber juice added, if available) is a treatment for unsightly freckles when they are too numerous to be attractive. For varicose veins, bind leaves around the legs at night, hold in place with cabbage leaves and bandage with a cotton cloth.

A small vase of the flowers placed in a sick room is said to keep it fresh and make the atmosphere cooler.

▣ Dose: Eat a handful of the raw leaves once daily, a few of the flowers as well. Sorrel can also be macerated in sour milk, a tablespoon of the leaves to one cup of milk; it adds a pleasant sour taste to the milk and imparts to it its medicinal properties. Drink a cupful twice daily before meals.

Externally: One peasant method of preparing sorrel leaves, for external use, is to wrap a handful of the herb in a cabbage leaf and to macerate it in warm ashes until all is reduced to a pulp. A Standard Brew made of the leaves and/or flowers is used as a lotion. For eye ailments use this lotion only. Or the leaves can be bruised and steeped in oil for several days. (See pages 7-8) The leaves can also be crushed to a pulp and applied directly, for skin treatments, burns and scalds.

Wormwood

Artemisia absinthium. Compositae

Found on wasteland in dry regions, sometimes in the desert, also on rocky land. Cultivated in herb gardens. Leaves are greyish, fringed, and covered with short silken down. Flowers are in erect panicles, and are small, greenish-yellow, globular in form.

The whole plant is extremely aromatic and bitter tasting, its bitterness being mentioned in the Bible. This pungency and bitterness are due to the presence of absinthate of potassium and a quantity of green camphorated volatile oil. It yields what the druggists call *absinthe*. This bitter principle is used to make the tonic wine of France, absinthe.

Over-use of this potent wine was found to cause epilepsy, and brought into ill repute an herb so beneficial that the Greek

goddess Artemis chose this plant for her own. She received such health benefits from wormwood that she gave it her own name in place of the former one of "parthensis." Many other herbs have been harmed by misuse of extracts derived from them.

In antiquity wormwood was chosen as a symbol of health, and healers painted it on their doors as a sign to their patients. I would happily paint wormwood on my door, for it is one of my chosen herbs and I make great use of it in my herbal work. The Provence peasants say of wormwood that if women realized the good that it could do them, they would wear it around their heads as a crown to do honor to this remarkable herb. The great healer Saint John the Baptist habitually wore a girdle woven from wormwood, and one of its common names is St. John's girdle.

☸ Use, internal: Primarily antiseptic, nervine, vermifuge and narcotic. Like all bitters it is a good tonic and aid to digestion. Treats all fevers, infestations of worms, enteritis, constipation, jaundice. To restore appetite, allay pains from indigestion, stimulate deficient gastric juices, cure diarrhea and dysentery. For all women's ailments, including leucorrhea, morning sickness, threatened miscarriage. Also obesity, dropsy, constipation.

❀ Use, external: An insecticide and general antiseptic. Used internally and externally to check undue falling of hair and baldness, and to cleanse the human body of vermin, such as lice and fleas. Combined with other herbs as a repellent for stinging or biting insects or animals, and to soothe bites of such. As a treatment for ear troubles and to soothe earache.

▣ Dose: Wormwood is a potent herb; over-use will increase unduly the action of the heart and blood vessels. It should not be taken for long periods in over-large doses. In proper dosage, long esteemed to safeguard and strengthen the human body, especially the female body. Make a weak Standard Brew, using only three sprigs of wormwood about six inches in length to two cups of water, and take two tablespoons morning and night during the prescribed period of treatment, which is usually until the symptoms vanish, then the use of wormwood should be discontinued. Sweeten with honey to disguise the bitterness of this herb.

Plate 16. 1. Woodruff 2. Wood Sage 3. Wood Sorrel
4. Wormwood 5. Yarrow 6. Yellow Rocket

Yarrow

Achillea millefolium. Compositae

Found along waysides and in pastures. Leaves are greyish, finely feathered and pungent. Flowers are in corymbs of white or pink diskform flowers. The whole plant has a biting and bitterish taste which is not unpleasant. Indeed sheep and goats seek it out for its tonic properties and peppery taste. This is an herb long known for its powers in the healing of wounds. The Greek warrior and athlete Achilles gave it his name. It is told that he was he first to discover its medicinal virtues, and that by using yarrow blossoms he healed his own battle wounds and those of his soldiers.

The peculiar fragrance and taste of yarrow are due to the presence of achilleic and tannic acids, also an essential oil of yarrow and a bitter extractive. The plant will yield its properties to water or alcohol. It is often used by peasants as a substitute for quinine, and is quite as effective and far safer than that drug. Sometimes used for beer in place of hops.

❁ Use, internal: Apart from its use in the treatment of all types of hemorrhages, it is also a great fever herb (including intermittent fevers) owing to its peculiar power of dilating the skin pores and producing copious sweating. Much used in smallpox, typhoid fever, malaria, pneumonia, pleurisy, inflamed throat, rheumatism. For hysteria, epilepsy, trembling. For colds, headaches, diarrhea, dysentery, diarrhea of infants. Its astringent properties effectively check hemorrhage and over-profuse menstruation.

❀ Use, external: All wounds, ulcers old and new, fistulas, soft tumors. To check falling of the hair, bathe the head with yarrow brew and massage also with salve made from the flowers. To quell toothache, chew the leaves. For earache, apply some of the lotion quite hot to the ears, and insert a few drops of cooler lotion. Use as a douche in diarrhea, dysentery (as well as taking as an internal medicine), also for piles and womb troubles. As an oil infusion, repels mosquitoes.

▣ Dose: Of a Standard Brew, a wineglass morning and night, sweetened with honey. *Externally*: Make a stronger brew, dou-

bling the amount of herb to the same given amount of water. In fevers, give the patient a yarrow bath, tossing several handfuls of yarrow into a bath of hot water, as well as giving drinks of yarrow brew. To make a salve of the flowers, melt cold cream or vegetable fat and work into this the finely cut blossoms; add a little beeswax, if possible, to help the salve solidify. For earache, in addition to the warm yarrow lotion, a wad of the well-warmed crushed leaves can be placed in each ear.

Yellow rocket (wintercress)

Barbarea vulgaris. Cruciferae

Found in hedgerows, pasture land and in gardens. Leaves are small and pinnate. Flowers are small, yellow, cross-form and shed their petals readily. Seed pods are prominent, long and narrow, four angled. The plant grows from one to two feet high, and has a stout and glabrous stem. Often found in wintertime. Dedicated to Saint Barbara, who blessed it; hence its generic name.

❁ Use, internal: A peppery, biting herb. Antiseptic, healing, tonic and cheering to the human spirit. The Arabs use it in milk to safeguard health when their herds are not in the best of condition. Treats colds, catarrh, indigestion, stomach disorders, flatulence, lack of appetite. As a general tonic, to give internal warmth in winter weather, and to banish depression. As a vermifuge and rheumatism remedy.

▣ Dose: Eat six or so raw seed pods morning and night. For treatment of worms, double the dose.

New Botanical Names

The following family names have been changed

Compositae is now Asteraceae
Labiatae is now Lamiaceae
Umbelliferae is now Apiaceae
Leguminosae is now Fabaceae

Chapter 3

Recipes

Cosmetic, Medicinal, Culinary and Other

All who work with herbs have many recipes, which they have gathered together over the years. Here, I am giving around fifty, ranging from the recipes which are of culinary use at home, utilizing herbs (including cereals and fruits), to toilet preparations, beverages and medicines. In the preceding chapter of Materia Medica, there are recipes included in the text.

In this chapter several recipes include leaves of trees not featured in this book, but such leaves can be obtained easily and the recipes are favorites of mine, so I have used them.

Toilet Preparations

Tooth-powder. Make a vegetable charcoal by burning slices of bread to charcoal. Pound the black slices into a fine powder. Flavor with a few drops of oil of peppermint, clove, or rosemary. Brush the teeth with this, morning and night, using a soft brush and cold water.

Tooth-powder (stain remover). Sage leaves and common sea salt, rubbed well together, then baked until hard. Pound into a fine powder. Rub the teeth with this every morning and evening. This will take away all yellow film and stains. (Many Swiss peasants and Bedouin Arabs clean their teeth merely by rubbing with sage leaves.) Try the juice of fresh strawberries on cotton wool brushed over the teeth to give shining whiteness.

Vanilla Toothpaste (French). Vegetable charcoal powdered one ounce, white honey (clover will do) one ounce, vanilla sugar one

ounce, Peruvian bark (quinine bark) a half ounce, and a few drops of any essential oil, such as peppermint, or drops of tincture of lavender. The vanilla sugar can be made by triturating (rubbing to a powder) a teaspoon of saturated tincture of vanilla with an ounce of icing sugar, and drying the mixture by employing a gentle heat. Mix the powdered ingredients together, then blend into the honey and the flavorings. Press into a glass pot and use on a damp toothbrush.

Cleansing Cream (for the face and hands). Oil of sweet almonds three ounces, white wax half an ounce, lanolin one ounce, rose water one ounce, oil of jasmine ten drops, oil of rose geranium ten drops (or other flower oils can be used, such as lavender, rosemary, orange blossom). Beat together the white wax and lanolin in a double boiler. Beat hard again, adding almond oil. Slowly blend in the rose water. Remove from heat, and when body temperature add the floral oils, drop by drop. Pour into jars to set. Do not use plastic containers.

Complexion Lotion. See Elder, page 58.

Cucumber Eye Lotion. From a six-inch slice of fresh cucumber squeeze the juice. Add two tablespoons of whey to this, and apply to the eyes, internally and externally. If whey is not available, the cucumber juice can be used neat. Cools and soothes inflamed eyes, tones up the membranes of the eyes.

Hair Tonic and Setting Lotion. Cut up a handful of sage leaves and tops and the same quantity of rosemary. Place in a pint of cold water and bring slowly to the boil. Simmer for three minutes, keeping covered throughout. Remove from heat and allow to steep for three hours. Do not strain, merely pour off the required quantity for massaging into the scalp and hair every night. The lotion is improved by adding ten drops of oil of rosemary; or natural eau de cologne (not synthetic) can be added. Tones the hair, sets the hair, improves its color, removes scurf. (For darkening, add black tea.)

Hair-growing Oil. Take a handful each of willow (*Salix* species) leaves and maidenhair fern and heat them slowly in a half-

pint of salad oil into which three cloves have been tossed. Heat gently, by standing the container in hot water over a low flame. Keep on the heat for one hour. Do not strain until cold. Then strain and pour into glass jars or clay crocks. Massage the scalp with the herbal oil every night.

Spirits of Lavender. Dried lavender flowers, two tablespoons, one grated nutmeg, two teaspoonfuls of cinnamon, sweet cecily leaves (if available) one tablespoon. Pulverize all the ingredients and mix well together. Add a quart of pure grain alcohol. Let the mixture stand and steep in a warm place (sunlight is good) and shake well once daily. Then strain off and bottle, capping tightly. Excellent applied on cloths wrung out in cold water, and placed over the forehead, to allay headache, soothe fevers. In fevers also apply to the pulse on the wrists. As a tonic, a few drops also can be taken internally on loaf sugar for nervous ailments and mental depression.

Queen of Hungary's Water. Follow the same recipe as for spirits of lavender, but using tops and flowers of fresh rosemary instead of the dried lavender, using double the amount, and omit the sweet cecily leaves. Similar use to spirits of lavender.

Pot Pourri (Provence). Gather as many as possible of the following kinds of scented flowers: petals of the pale red and dark red roses, moss roses and damask roses, also acacia and the heads of pinks, violets, lily of the valley, lilacs (blue and white) orange blossom and lemon blossom, mignonette, heliotrope, narcissi and jonquils: with a *small* proportion of the flowers of balm, rosemary, thyme and myrtle. Spread them out to dry, and as they become fully dry in turn, put them into a tall glass jar, with alternate layers of coarse salt, mixed with powdered orris root (use two parts of salt to one of orris). Pack the flowers and salt-orris, until the vessel is filled. Close the jar for one month, then stir all up and moisten with sufficient rosewater to penetrate to the lowest layer. Cap with a muslin cloth tightly tied, and use in cotton bags to scent linen closets. Used also for scenting writing paper (in former days!).

Scented Powders:

1. Poudre a la Mareschale. Take one pound of moss scraped from oak trees (a grey moss, called "lungs of oak" by the American Indians and used for treatment of wounds). Reduce the moss to a powder, after drying it well. Add a half pound of common starch. Take also, all reduced to powder, of calamus root one ounce, cypress one ounce, rotten oak-wood powder one ounce, cloves a half-ounce. Mix well. Cypress is a perennial, rushlike plant related to papyrus and mariscus.

2. Poudre d'acacia. Take one pound of powdered orris root, half a pound of dried and powdered acacia flowers, two ounces dried bergamot peel, quarter ounce of powdered cloves, and several heads of the sweet-scented purple-flowered wild orchis, *Gymnadenia conopsea*. Pound all together. The bergamot orange is much like the Seville, but pear-shaped, and its acid pulp is very fragrant.

3. Poudre de Chypre. Oak moss is macerated in water (preferably spring water — bottled Vichy water can be used). Steep the moss in the water for several days, and then submit it to strong pressure in a cotton cloth. Then moisten with rosewater mixed with one-third of orange-flower water until the moss has absorbed to full capacity. Then press the moss further and pulverize it. This *poudre de Chypre* is used as a basis for other flower perfumes, and greatly increases their powers.

Lotion for a Fragrant Breath. Take half a pint of sherry wine and into this put an ounce each of powdered cloves and grated nutmeg, and a half-ounce each of ground cinnamon and bruised caraway seeds. Place all in a pint flask and allow to stand for three days, shaking the mixture well morning and night. Finely strain the mixture through a cheesecloth and add ten drops of spirits of lavender (see page 183). A few drops of this wine mixture taken on loaf sugar will give a fragrant breath. A few drops can be added to water to make an excellent gargle.

Remedies

Gargle. Take a handful each of elder blossom and sage leaves and tops, and make a brew in a half-pint of cold water. Add a heaped teaspoon of honey, a half-teaspoon of oil of sweet almonds, and five drops of oil of cloves. Gargle with this frequently to ease a sore throat and to allay a cough.

Throat Pack. See page 194.

Remedy for a Cold. Soften a handful of rosemary tops in warm water, then plunge them into a pint of hot cider. Add a pinch of ground cayenne pepper and a pinch of ground ginger; drink hot. Alternate with strong tea of sage and borage with honey.

Remedy for Colds and Fevers. See lemon, page 95.

Remedy for Earache. Cut up finely a handful of horehound. Place in a half a pint of cold water, heat, then remove before boiling point is reached. Steep for four hours. Strain. Add two drops of clove oil to every teaspoon of horehound brew. Drop a teaspoonful into the ears, using at tepid heat. When ear pains are very acute, mix six poppy heads in with the horehound, when the water containing the horehound has become warm.

Remedy for Weak Eyes. Take some of the young, moist buds of white poplar tree before they open. Fill with warmed honey and press over the eyes, holding them there for five minutes if possible. Strengthens all the eye tissues.

Chest Rub. Take a handful of the grey lichen from oak trees (Sticta pulmonaria), and make a strong brew, heating this in a pint of hot ale. Add a few drops of camphorated oil, six drops to the pint, and apply hot to the chest and around the back, in the chest region. Keep the body warm.

Chilblain Ointment. See Primrose, page 124.

Toothache Remedy. Soak whole cloves in hot honey, and let the patient chew them slowly, rolling them around the aching tooth. (A well-proven French Gypsy remedy.) Nut galls found in dyer's oak or by *Quercus infectoria*, rich in tannin, are also so used.

Remedy for Stomachache. Take a small handful each of endive and fresh mint and steep them in a pint of white wine for a whole day. Add a teaspoon each of powdered cinnamon and wild thyme and a generous pinch of dill seeds. Strain after steeping and take a wineglass three times daily before meals. (With severe stomach pains the patient should be fasting on herbal teas only.)

Remedy for Festering Sores or Whitlows. Heat a whole lemon, make a tunnel down the center; pack this with common salt and fresh pine needles and place the affected finger within, keeping it buried in the lemon as long as possible. Repeat the treatment as needed until the ailment is cured.

Rubbing Lotion. Steep a heaped tablespoon of powdered seaweed and one teaspoon of cayenne pepper in hot apple cider vinegar, add six drops of oil of pine, and use as a rub for stiff and aching joints and other parts of the body where there is stiffness or pain.

Burns and Scalds. Apply slices of raw potato immediately, squeezing the juice onto the burnt or scalded parts. Preferably grate the potato finely. Then apply thick honey to exclude all air.

Another remedy — said to have been handed down by the crusaders as a relief against burns from oil, when men poured boiling oil down upon their enemies during warfare — warm sweet chestnut leaves in hot water to soften them, place in the air to cool, and when cold lay the wet leaves over the burns. Then cover with a cotton cloth and pour cold tea over the cloth at intervals to keep the cloth cool and moist. This will extract the "fire" from the burn and prevent scar tissue. The tea part of this recipe was a later refinement, for tea was not drunk in Europe until the seventeenth century. Or "tea" may have indicated any bland herbal brew.

I have proved instant pain relief in severe burns by gently pressing over the burns the inner (slimy) sides of the peels of ripe bananas, and further binding peels over the area or areas (inner side touching the burn). Change the peels every few hours.

Worm Remedy. Give a handful of green walnut leaves boiled

in milk. About three or four leaves, taken fasting in the early morning for three days or more, until the case is cured.

"Green" Surgical Dressing. If people would apply the drawing, cooling, healing and antiseptic powers of the many "wound" herbs to wounds from surgery and otherwise, to sores of all kinds, they would in many cases obtain such speedy relief from pain, and in some cases achieve such speedy healing, that they would never again use chemical applications. Throughout the text of the Materia Medica chapter, wound herbs are given. The following are the ones which I use most in my herbal work: the tender leaves of cabbage, kale, lettuce, geranium, violet, vine, bindweed (especially the large leaves of morning glory), castor oil leaves, and those of the yellow pond lily. Use one kind, or a blend of several. Wash the leaves free of dust, snip off all stalks, break down any ridgy veins by pressure, and lay over the wounds, sores. When the leaves heat up from the inflammation and impurities that they have extracted, replace with fresh ones. Bind with damp cotton cloths.

Remedies for Stings. The basis for successful treatment of stings is immediate action. Do not let stings and bites from insects and animals stay untreated, to inflame and swell.

1. ***Ants***. Pulp up some cloves of garlic or take slices of raw onion and apply at once. Further soothe the irritated parts with cucumber juice or pulped parsley or garlic in vinegar.

2. ***Bees and Wasps***. First remove the sting, then press out the poison from the skin. Soothe the fire of the sting with a paste of whitewash. After an hour wash off, as whitewash itself lightly burns the skin. Then soothe with herbal oil, and bind over with leaves of dock or plantain. Or apply parsley or garlic in vinegar, as above for ant bites.

3. ***Scorpions, Poisonous Spiders, Medusae (jellyfish)***. If first-aid is necessary, cut the place with the point of a sharp knife and press or suck out (of course, not swallowing) all the surface poison. Then apply the pulped leaves of wormwood, rue and sage, as available. Preferably heat the leaves for a few minutes in hot water to make their volatile oils more easily available to the hu-

man skin. Bind in place with cotton bandages soaked in a mixture of hot water and vinegar, equal parts. Even more effective is an application of extracted oils of wormwood, rue and rosemary (see pages 7-8), if available, likewise covering with bandages soaked in hot vinegar water. (I have cured numerous cases of severe bites, several being from the giant species of scorpion, considered fatal, using this treatment.) The most effective and the speediest remedies are the essential oils of these herbs applied on swabs of cotton wool first dampened in hot water.

4. Mosquitoes and Midges. To keep away when spending evenings out of doors: Gather some of the aromatic herbs, such as sage, southernwood, rue, rosemary, elecampane and others, add some dry paper or dry grass, place in quite large open cans, sprinkle the herbs with paraffin and ignite. The pungent smoke will clear the air of mosquitoes and kindred biting insects. The Mexican Indians burn thuja pine.

Beverages

Gorse Blossom Champagne. Take a half gallon measure of gorse blossoms, one gallon of hot water, one lemon, two pounds cane sugar (or one and a half pounds sugar and a half pound pure honey), one pound raisins (the large ones if possible), one thick slice of toasted brown bread, and one ounce yeast.

Put blossoms, sugar and hot water into a large enamel bowl and leave for one week. At the end of this period, press down the blossoms and stir well. Do this each day for a week, and then strain out the solids.

Into the strained liquid put the raisins cut small and the lemon thinly sliced. Now spread the slice of bread on both sides with the yeast, and put this to float on the brew. Leave for fourteen days, then skim off any floating residue, and strain further until the liquid is clear and bottle. *Note*: The blossoms must be dry for gathering. Be sure to cork the bottles tightly, and use natural cork stoppers, not plastic ones. (This is a New Forest, England recipe. It was Augustus John, the famous painter, who named

this wine "gorse champagne." I used to take him bottles of this gorse drink.)

Sunflower Cordial. Take two large handfuls of sunflower seeds and place in a pan. Add one and a half pints of cold water, a slice of lemon (about a finger thick), and a piece of ginger root about four inches long. Bring to just below boiling point and simmer gently until the seeds are soft (approximately one hour or less). Allow to stand and steep. When the cordial is medium warm, strain it and stir in a small half cupful of pure honey. Drink cold. (The children can eat up the boiled seeds, extracting their kernels.) This is a very old recipe, in fact, several hundred years old, from French Canada. Maple syrup was often used to sweeten this healthful delicious beverage.

Treacle Ginger beer. Take one pound brown sugar, one ounce bruised ginger root, a quarter ounce hops, and a pinch of saffron. Pour over these ingredients three quarts of water. Boil for a few minutes in the water, strain and add five quarts of cold water. Finally add a tablespoon of fresh yeast. Let the mixture work all night and bottle the following morning, not corking too tightly for several days. Do not fill the bottles to the top; leave several inches for expansion. A good blood and nerve tonic.

Kingcup (From Provence, France). Pour two pints of hot water onto the outer rind of two well-ripened lemons, two small slices of orange peel and six slices of cucumber. Then add twelve lumps of cane sugar. (Honeycomb is often used in place of the sugar, about half a comb.) When cold add leaves of basil and mint, and sprinkle with powdered cinnamon to taste.

Barley Water. See barley, page 20.

Oatmeal Gruel. See oats, page 113.

Linseed Tea. See flaxseed, page 65.

Bran Water. Take two cupfuls of bran and pour over them a quart of tepid water. Allow to stand overnight. In the morning strain through a cloth, pressing the bran well until all moisture is extracted, and use this water as a base for herb soups, instead of ordinary water.

Herb Soup. Take a quart of bran water, as described above. Then take a cupful each of the following herbs, finely cut: wild mustard tops, chickweed, wild garlic leaves, a few sorrel leaves, and abundant watercress. Pour one pint of water just off the boil onto these herbs, and let them steep for a half hour. Strain, and then add this to the bran water. Now stir into this mixture one cup of sweet oatmeal, and let all simmer for a few minutes. Thicken with a handful of boiled, peeled and mashed chestnuts. (A truly body-building soup.)

Buttermilk Lemonade (Andalusia, Spain). Strain the whey off goat cheese, collecting one pint. Add to this the juice of two small lemons and sweeten with two heaped tablespoons of honey. Serve very cold with a few jasmine (white) flowers added and a handful of blanched almonds.

Medicated Wine. To a pint of sweet red wine add several sprigs of rosemary and wormwood, six candied cherries, two nutmegs, an inch piece of cinnamon bark and candied angelica and bruised ginger root, a dozen large raisins. Allow to steep for one week, keeping in a warm place and shaking every day. Add a further pint of plain, sweet red wine to this, mix well, strain, and take after meals as a blood and nerve tonic.

Strawberry or Cherry Liqueur. Mash ripe strawberries and infuse in sweet red wine. To every cupful of strawberries add one cup sugar, two teaspoons honey, two and a half cup wine. Let steep overnight, then strain and chill. Drink this the same day or following day. Place a fresh, whole strawberry in each liqueur glass. Dried cherries (I buy mine from Turkey and Balkan countries, by the pound) can be used instead of strawberries to make a delicious drink. Wash the cherries well before use as they are often earthy. The strawberry or cherry residue remaining, after straining off the liqueur, can be used with cream in a trifle sweet.

Brambleberry Wine. Put a quart of blackberries into a pan, cover with boiling water. Stand in a coolish oven overnight to extract the juice. Then strain well into a large stone jar, and ferment (covered) for two weeks. Then add half pound of best cane sugar to every quarter of liquid and one teaspoon of brandy per

quart. Seal well. Very good nerve tonic and reviving in feverish colds.

Moorland Tea. Take a handful each of leaves of bilberry, blackberry, speedwell, thyme, wild strawberry, and heather tops. Dry and then mix well. Use as tonic tea, one teaspoon to a cup of water, sweetened with honey. Robert Burns liked this tea.

Cheering Tea. Take a handful each of flower heads of lavender, cornflower, marigold, lime blossom, and a half-handful of flowering sprigs of rosemary and sage, a teaspoon of dill seeds and a pinch of poppy seeds. Dry the herbs, rubbing the petals free of the flower stalks, which should be discarded, and blend with the seeds. Use as a common tea, one teaspoon to a cup of water, sweetened with honey. A remedy against indigestion, headache, fatigue and mental depression. Will aid sound sleep.

"Hot" Milk. To a pint of bran water (see page 189), add one small capsicum pod (cayenne pepper), sliced, a pinch of common pepper, a teaspoon of mustard seed, teaspoon of celery seed, six cloves of cut garlic, a handful of garlic or onion greens. Heat and simmer gently for ten minutes, or until the garlic is soft. Then add one pint of fresh milk, blending slowly. Salt to taste.

Various

Herb Bread. When making wheaten or barley flour bread, add a handful of cooked linseed to the dough, and any (or several) of the following aromatic herbs: chives, thyme, chervil, marjoram. Chop the herb or herbs finely, and add a heaped tablespoon to every pound of flour. When the dough has risen make a hollow in the center and add a teaspoon of garlic-flavored corn oil (garlic cloves steeped for several days in the oil extracted from sweet corn) to every pound of flour. Allow to rise further and then re-knead to mix in the oil. Brush the tops of the loaves with the garlic-flavored oil and sprinkle thickly with poppy seeds.

Instead of greasing and flouring the baking tins in the usual

way, add a teaspoon of lemon juice to every pound-loaf baking tin, before greasing. This browns the loaves a fine color and prevents burning. I use lemon juice in all my baking tins.

Roasted Flour. Sprinkle a half-pound of wheat or barley flour lightly onto a dry baking tin, and place in a warm oven, leaving the door ajar. Shake the tin frequently, and stir and turn over the flour, using a flat knife. Roast the flour until a pale "biscuit" brown, then set aside to cool. Stir into the flour several teaspoons of roasted poppy seeds or pine kernels, if desired. Can be stored in airtight jars or tins and will keep as well as ordinary biscuits. Eat like a cereal food, with milk, and sweetened with sugar, ground cinnamon or nutmeg, as desired. An excellent food for infants is made by putting a handful of the roasted flour into a basin and mixing into a thin paste with cold milk. Then heat a pint of milk to blood heat and stir this slowly into the cold milk and flour mixture. Sweeten with honey, a little treacle, or nutmeg, as liked.

Olives with Herbs. Place a handful of prepared stoned green olives in a pound-size jar, and add the following: three cloves, six pieces of garlic, one sliced cayenne pepper, a sprig of rue, three dried heads of basil flowers, and three large basil leaves, three sprays of dill (green) and rosemary. Fill jar with olive oil (half olive and half sunflower oil make the herbs taste more strongly). If the olives are for immediate use, several slices of pickled lemon can also be added (this lessens the keeping quality of the olives).

Rose Hips Conserve. Take four pounds of rose hips and a little under two and a half pints cold water. Bring to the boil and simmer for a quarter hour, keeping well stirred. Press the cooked hips through strong muslin for straining. The hips are now ready to make into conserve. To every two pounds of strained hips add one pound of cane sugar and a quarter pound pure honey (not dark honey). Place again in the saucepan, add the juice of half a lemon to every two pounds of the hips-sugar mixture, heat gently and keep well stirred, heating at this low temperature for approximately half an hour (until the jam begin to simmer strongly). Then cook at a higher heat for a further ten minutes. Remove from the heat and pour into warmed earthen crocks if possible

(or into warmed half-pound glass jars, not larger). When cooler, stir into each jar a half-teaspoon of witchhazel extract as a preservative. When cold, seal with waxed paper. A blood-cooling conserve. Vitamin and mineral rich.

Salad to give the Skin a Healthy "Suntan." Make a base of watercress, add the leaves of parsley, strawberry, young burdock, and sliced, boiled burdock and salep (Arabic *tha'leb*). This recipe from the early eleventh-century Arabian herbalist Avicenna who noted the effects of herbs in the diet upon the human skin. Salep is a fine meal ground from the roots of orchidaceous plants.

A Sallat of Flowers. A recipe dedicated to "the Ladie Frances, Countess Dowager of Exeter, a Seventeenth-centurie Housewife."

> Take of flowers, primrose, cowslip and clove-gilly flowers, a deep basketful. Cut off their stalkes. Prepare a large glass pot, strew a little sugar in the bottom, then a layer of flowers, then cover that layer with more sugar, then lay another of the flowers, and then another of the sugar, and this do above one another until the pot be filled to the verie top.
>
> Then press the flowers and sugar hard down with your hand.
>
> Take a sharpe and bitter wine and pour into the pot until it floats above the top layer. Then set in a dry temperature and seal the pot well. Then eat the sallat at your pleasure, for it will last fresh until the flowers come again.

Herbal Tobacco (English Gypsy). To a base of dried, finely rubbed coltsfoot leaves, add in smaller proportion (blending to individual taste), thyme, rosemary, eyebright, ground ivy and wood betony, lily of the valley leaves (all or any, as available). All dried and finely sifted. Smoke in a clay pipe.

Rosemary. *From Bankes Herball* (seventeenth century).

> Take the sweet flowres and make a powder therof and bynde it to the ryght arme in a lynen clothe and it shall make thee lyght and merrie. Also take the flowres and put them in a chest amonge thy clothes or amonge bookes, and mougthes [moths] shall not hurte them. Also boyle the leves in whyte wyne and wasshe thy face therwith . . . thou shall have a fayre face. Also put the leves under thy beddes heed, and thou shall be delyvered of all evyll dremes. Also take the leves and put them into a vessel of wyne . . . if thou sell that wyne, thou shall have good lucke and spede in the

> sale. Also make thee a box of the wood and smell it and it shall preserve thy youthe. Also put therof in thy doores or in thy howse and thou shall be withoute dannger of adders and other venymous serpentes. Also make thee a barell therof for the rayne and drynke thou of the drynke that standeth therin and thou nedes to fere no poyson that shall hurte thee. And if thou plante it in thy garden kepe it honestly for it is muche profytable.

Fertility Herbs. On fertility depends the survival of the human family and the human race. There are many fertility herbs; here are some known to me.

All the mints (except peppermint), basil, balm, marjoram, sage, rosemary, thyme, nasturtium, coriander (including the seed), vervain, bindweed, fumitory, wormwood, southernwood, borage, fennel (including the seed), anise and dill seed, nettle seed, linseed, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, cayenne pepper, licorice, flowers of red roses and red clover, fruits, juice and tendrils of the grape vine, prepared roots of common purple orchid, raw corn (maize) kernels, raw (flaked) oats, nuts of almond and pistachio trees, summer savory (whole herb), angelica stems, chicory flowers, rue flowers, fennel hearts, heather. The fertility herbs are eaten raw. When palatable mix with salads or cereal flakes. When unpalatable cut small and make into pills, binding them with fine flour and thick honey. General amount of fertility herb is one heaped teaspoon daily (or more if desired) taken until no longer needed.

Throat Pack. (Effective for treatment of sore throat or stiff neck; also for swollen glands and mumps.) Soak a piece of linen or cotton cloth in castor oil, to which has been added six drops of camphorated oil to every four ounces of castor oil. (Do not use woolen cloth.) Place on enamel or tin plate in the oven and heat until linen begins to singe. Apply the cloth to the throat when as hot as can just be tolerated, wrapping well around the whole area. Then bind into place with a broad cotton bandage, and wear this all night.

Chapter 4

Herbs Applied to Garden and Orchard

Since man first cultivated the earth and planted wild flowers, fruits and vegetables around his home, he began to notice that some plants were protective of others. This phenomenon was explained in many ways before the ecologists took over, and cottage gardeners have applied this knowledge for centuries.

During my travels I have sought out such herbal lore, and wherever I have had a stretch of land for my own use for a while, I have put into practice what I have learnt of this association. In this way, I suppose that I have learnt to treat my plants and trees as I treat my children and animals, feeding tonic herbs to them and surrounding them with the protective ones.

I found that the herbs known as aromatics and bitters were the most important for plant and tree protection. I was not, as I have just said, the first to use such herbs in agriculture. Centuries ago, the Moors were planting rosemary in their fruit gardens to protect their trees and vines from pests. Likewise the French peasants planted onions and garlic and wormwood as protective barriers.

I first discovered by accident the value of the bitter and aromatic herbs as tonics to other plants. This was when I took over an old cottage and apple orchard in the New Forest in England, and there were rats in plenty to eat up my plants as fast as I grew them! So I sprinkled bitter herbs on and around my plants, using such herbs in dry, finely powdered form. This kept the rodents and slugs away and I found that my flowers and vegetables grew to remarkable size as a further result.

This was not quite the first time that I had used one plant to protect another. As long ago as 1947, when I was a gardener to Professor Edmond Bordeau Szekely on his Nature Ranch in Mexico, near the California border, I protected seedlings from the ravages of wild birds using powdered garlic roots, sprinkled heavily upon and around the seedlings. The idea was a success. The seedlings grew up to safe and healthy maturity, but the garden has a most unpleasant smell after every shower of rain.

Herbs to protect other plants and trees must be either pungently aromatic or extremely bitter. Tomato haulm, after the fruit has been gathered, may be hung on fruit trees, as insect pests do not like its odor. Mexican Indians use tomato haulm in their homes to keep away cockroaches and poisonous insects.

Cayenne pepper is sprinkled on the foliage of fruit trees, before the fruit ripens, to keep away fruit fly. It is a tonic to the tree itself, and harmless to human beings and birds, if any of this pungent, burning pepper powder should get onto the fruit. But it is disliked by the invading fruit-destroying fly.

Readers of earlier editions of this book have asked me if I know of a complete cure for fruit fly. I do not know and there should NOT be a complete cure, for in my opinion the fruit fly is sent by nature to spoil much of the tree fruits every year, so as to prevent the health of the tree itself being damaged by having to bear unnaturally heavy crops caused by modern cultivation. From my own vines and trees, annually I strip off and throw back to vine or tree almost half of the fruits before they ripen. I have less to sell and eat, but quality of fruit is better and the trees keep strong and healthy.

Aromatic bitters such as wormwood, southernwood, mugwort, rue and others mentioned in this book as insect repellents also deter birds at seed-planting times. Beans, peas, peanuts, and the grains of cereals, and all other types of seed which birds like to eat, are sprinkled with such herbs (dried and finely powdered). I myself sprinkle the seeds themselves *as I plant them in the soil,* before I put the topsoil over them. This protecting powder also deters rats and mice and other seed-stealing creatures. I and many

other gardeners in many parts of the world, using this herbal treatment, have had no failures in growing maximum crops. These dried herbs are also a tonic to the seeds which they are protecting. French peasants plant scillas to deter moles.

It is possible to utilize the absorptive properties of sphagnum moss in plant protection. A strong brew is made from the already mentioned bitter herbs, and the dried sphagnum is saturated in this. The saturated moss is then packed around the plants and will retain its protective power even during heavy rain and strong winds which would wash or blow away herbal dusts.

As insect repellents (plants of old-time use by gardeners and farmers) such things as the powdered heads of African daisy, *pyrethrum*, powdered derris root, and tobacco dust, are still in great demand. The much acclaimed chemical and poisonous products, which have done such vast and as yet unestimated damage to the health of human beings, animals, birds and bees as well as to the crops and trees on which they have been used, have lost much of their former popularity. Nor are the poisonous chemical sprays very effective. For instance I have noted many times that people living in houses screened against mosquitoes, and at the same time using chemical poison sprays (once mostly containing D.D.T.) against such mosquitoes as do manage to enter their dwellings despite the screening, are more troubled with mosquito bites than my family who sleep out of doors when living in hot climates, without any netting or screening against mosquitoes, and merely relying on a lotion of herbs applied to faces and hands. We are rarely bitten, even when we have been living in such mosquito-infested area as the coconut groves of tropical Mexico, or the marshes of the French Carmargue.

There are herbs available for disinfecting the soil. The best of these, and the easiest to grow, are mustard and sage. Mustard grows very rapidly and is a cheap crop. At flowering time it is cut and dug into the ground. It is a tonic to other plants and kills off the eggs of insects which may be in the soil. Such use of mustard is not new; it is advocated in old farming journals and books, especially around the time of Queen Victoria, before the great

swing-over to chemical fertilizers and soil treatments. Sage is new to me. I have never found this use of it advised in any old agricultural books (which I used to study once with the same enthusiasm that many of my friends have for detective stories). I learnt its use from Professor Szekely in Mexico, and he in turn learnt it from the Mexican Indian workers on his lands where he grows thousands of acres of grapes.

Sage drops its leaves very prolifically twice a year, and they are swept up and mixed with goat manure and wood ash and then given to other plants, especially vines and corn; and what superb crops result! When American agricultural inspectors saw Professor Szekely's wonderful grapes, and were informed that he never used chemical sprays or fertilizers in his vineyards, and gave his vines scarcely any water, the inspectors refused to accept such natural treatment of vines! They declared that the professor's workers must be buying both chemical sprays and fertilizers themselves and using them without telling him!

Since my Mexican days I have recently, in the hills of Upper Galilee, using the same Mexican method, and with an abundance of wild sage plants at my disposal, grown wonderful grapes. Within two years of beginning the work I had the biggest vines in the village, although the vines on other land in the village were many years older. The agricultural authorities of the region have praised this successful use of sage as a plant tonic.

Grow comfrey in the garden. For as well as supplying leaves of the utmost medicinal value for man and animals, comfrey plants are beneficial to other plants. Being deep-rooting, they do not take away the minerals in the surface soil from other plants growing close to them, and they keep the surrounding soil rich and moist and give protective shade and shelter to other plants, with their large, rough leaves. I find my comfrey plants (the roots imported from England by post) of great help in Israel: not only for the salad herb that their young leaves provide, and the medicine of the older leaves, but also on account of the parasol shade that this plant gives to my seedlings under the fierce sun of Israel in spring and summertime.

Wood ash is not exactly an herb; but it is made from vegetable matter. As a fine powder it is a wonderful plant food, excellent for fruit trees. Daily in winter time I make a wood fire, and I save every ounce of the ash with as much care as if it were pure gold dust; it is almost of like value in my estimation. Sprinkled on pea and bean pods, tomatoes and soft fruits, it deters birds and rodents, does not leave an unpleasant taste and can be washed off easily. It is also harmless to plant and to man.

Powdered charcoal sprinkled on root vegetables is an excellent preventative of insect pests and wire worms, and so is straw burnt on the soil surface before sowing fragile seeds such as onion and many varieties of lettuce. A mere sprinkle per plant, more for trees, provides extra minerals, deters root pests, conserves moisture.

Every year I discard my old stores of dried herbs and replace with new season herbs. The old, I scatter around plants.

The result of the use of these recommended things of Nature in the growing of plants and trees is wonderful crops, flowers of great size, bright coloring and rich scents, vegetables, and fruits which are healthy, good-tasting and long-keeping. For instance, when harvested my grapes will remain in perfect condition for weeks in a midsummer in Israel, whereas shop-bought grapes, heavily irrigated, chemical sprayed, and given chemical fertilizers in the growing of them, turn bad overnight.

Experts such as J. L. Chase, founder of the agricultural firm of Chase Ltd., and agricultural inspectors in Israel, have seen and praised the crops grown and protected with the aid of herbs.

I have noted that ants dislike the pungency of herbal dusts, and I have removed ant hills from my flower beds merely by using on them my stale aromatic herbs (mixed with wood ash), when changing my herbal supplies for the new ones of each season.

Arab and Yemenite farmers in Israel proclaim proudly that they do not use chemical sprays or fertilizers on their crops. Some of them do make use of chemicals, but most of them do not. I noticed recently when a party of Yemenite farmers were taking

over land for crops, that they brought along their sacks of wood ash for the improvement of the soil. They use *habba* (basil) as an insecticide.

It is in Israel that I have found a use for the thorns and thistles which were created as a curse on the land (Gen. 3:18). Thistles and some of the very spiky thorns such as dom and bramble, and also the plant sea holly, cut when green, and banked around the feet of fruit trees, especially peach and almond trees which are much eaten by pests, will receive ample protection from the creeping pests such as caterpillars and grubs, which hatch out in the ground and then climb up into the trees. It is especially important to cut the thistles when green, for then their prickles are placed very close together. As they get older the stems lengthen and the prickles become wider apart, leaving uncovered stems to make bridges across the barricade, along which the invaders could travel. The difference to be seen between protected and unprotected trees is very impressive. And the spiky barricade does not harm the trees in any way and can be removed in the wintertime, when the trees are sleeping and have nothing to offer pests. I use thorny brush to keep birds from bush fruits, and with the same idea I allow brambles to grow up around my vines, they protect from snatch and run thieving by man as well as by birds!

Thorny branches thrust down mole holes discourage their over populous presence in gardens and orchards (as does the growing of wormwood, southernwood and rue).

It is notable that soft-bodied predators such as slugs and snails do not like the roughness of common bracken fern, so this makes a better litter for strawberries than straw.

The seaweed group of plants (Algae), green or brown or red, and including bladderwrack, seawracks generally, sea lettuce, carrageenan, provides a most valuable organic fertilizer for cultivated land on garden or field scale. The seaweeds may be used either well-rotted or dried and finely powdered. Generally speaking, about a handful is required per plant per year, with a half bucket per year for trees larger than saplings, and for these the application must be proportionate to size.

When packing plants for the market (either cut or with roots) dampened sphagum moss packed around them is a great help to keep them well.

Finally, because this is a chapter about nature gardening with herbs, I am writing about the influence of the moon on crops at their planting-time (although the following is not really about using herbs but on growing them.)

This moon-planting is not new, is indeed very old. The Moors centuries ago were experts on this planting rhythm, having studied very carefully the influences of the moon on crops.

The following is from an old manuscript, later printed at the Unicorn Press in Paternoster Row, London (in 1631), the precepts of which I have carefully followed over many years.

> These plants can be sown at all times of the moon: spinach, parsnip, carrot, radish, lettuce. In the new of the moon and early in the year, sow the pot herbs such as marjoram, thyme, basil, etc. rosemary and lavender, and most flowers, especially white poppy, double marigolds, sweet rocket, gilliflowers, and sow the gourds, including cucumber and melons in the full of the moon. Sow parsley, aniseed, dill, etc., mints, violets and pansies. Old moon, onions, leeks, cabbage and all the brassicas. In the gathering of seed for the next season sowings, only gather at the wane of the moon and in fine, dry, weather.

That the moon has extraordinary influence even on the smallest organisms is shown in the power of the moon on such tiny things as threadworms embedded in the intestines of a child or animal. The worms are far more active when the moon is full (as are all kinds of worms), and herbalists know that that is the best time to dose worm-infested creatures, in order to expel the worms. But nowadays the human race have shut out moonlight from their lives almost entirely. Only the nomad people now sleep out beneath the moon. Moonlight is needed for whole health and fertility of all creatures (stabled animals likewise suffer from this deprivation) and that is why I favor sleeping outdoors, and when sleeping indoors is necessary, then at least windows should be kept open and uncurtained.

Indoor plants should be put out into the moonlight and starlight just as they should enjoy sunlight for total health.

I worked out in this matter of moon planting, that things for which strong roots are required should be planted when the moon is waning — for example, vine and berry cuttings, and legumes. Where strong upper growth is desired — for example, all cereals, most vegetables — plant when the moon is waxing middle or full. Plant roses and perennials when mid-waxing.

Alberico Boncompagni Ludovisi (the Prince of Venosa, Italy), a dedicated Nature farmer, has for many years successfully followed my moon planting method for his vines and cereal crops on his lands outside Rome.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Johann von Cube wrote in his *Herbal*, printed in 1485: "I thank thee, O Creator of heaven and earth, who has given powers to the plants and other created things contained in this book, that thou hast granted me the grace to reveal this treasure, which until now has lain buried and hid from the sight of common men."

I do not make such high claims for my herbal. But, far and constant travels during the past thirty years, and my life shared mostly with peasants of Spain, Gypsies of Spain and many other lands from Turkey to North America, Mexican Indians, Berber and Bedouin Arabs, and others, all of them natural herbalists, have given me opportunities to collect first-hand knowledge much of which I do not think can be found in earlier herbals.

Of course not all of this book is original by any means. Herbalists share their common remedies, just as the orthodox doctors have their common chemical vaccine treatments, all universal.

These people whom I have mentioned, the peasants, the Gypsies, the Arabs and others, shared their herbal knowledge with me because they sensed my instinctive faith in this form of medicine, which really grew from my love of the wild plants of the world, with me from early childhood. (I always wanted to be a jobbing gardener by profession, but my father would not permit this; he allowed me to study veterinary medicine instead, because from early days I had skill with animals.)

For my part, I exchanged with my primitive herbal teachers new cures — new to them — which I had learnt in other lands. Sometimes I was able to cure my teachers, members of their family, or their animals, of ailments which had not yielded to their own

remedies because they did not know of the more effective herbs for those particular ills.

However, out of this carefully and slowly collected herbal knowledge, I know, as other herbalists before me have known, that there is no wonder herb able to cure all the ills of mankind.

Herbs have great powers (which no chemist can excel or even imitate fully), as can be shown by countless examples. For instance, the purging effect of a few senna pods steeped in cold water, the effect of the male fern root upon a tapeworm hooked to the intestines of a human body, the soothing effect of raw cucumber juice on inflamed eyes, or of rue leaves applied to stings of poisonous insects, or of sage tea to relieve a bad cough — and all the other examples of herbal treatments to be found in this book, each one of them powerful.

But in the treatment of disease, other means are usually needed to help the herbs to do their curative work. Sick people need to cleanse themselves through short fasts on herbal teas and fruit juices and to take herbal laxatives, or they should semi-fast on fruits and fresh milk. They also need fresh air, ample sleep and mental tranquility for a complete cure of any kind of ailment, be it a broken limb or a fever. Also faith is needed to persevere with herbal treatments which are sometimes very slow in their curative action, and which sometimes are seen to worsen the symptoms of the ailment before curing it. Moreover, certain beneficial effects can be misinterpreted as disasters (see, for example, strawberry rash, mentioned on page 155).

"Fast and pray," said Christ, one of the greatest healers in the history of the world. A good example of the slowness of herbs, and a lack of faith in those using them, was given some years ago after World War II, in an article published in the *News Chronicle*. The article appealed to me because it told of a Gypsy herbalist and her use of one of the herbs which I love best, elder blossom. It concerned a soldier blinded at Dunkirk and considered incurable. A traveling Gypsy woman saw the blind solider and noted his sadness; she advised the use of elder blossom as a treatment for the eyes.

The soldier's father carefully applied the treatment, but the elder blossom caused pain in the soldier's eyes, and they lost faith and stopped the treatment. On a further visit, the Gypsy met the soldier again and saw that his eyes had improved. She persuaded them to continue with the elder blossom, and the final result was that full sight was restored to the soldier's eyes. (One day, in his world of darkness, he saw a glimmer. It was his mother's wedding ring. Slowly the power of sight returned to the blind eyes.) It would be cruel and misleading to assert that this outcome of the treatment was inevitable, but it is certainly worth trying.

Often when following or giving herbal treatments, cure has seemed hopeless. But I have had faith, telling myself that the particular herb must cure; it has always cured that specific ailment through the ages: it was put on earth to cure such an ailment, and the knowledge of its use was given to mankind by God who created the medicinal plants.

Chemicals do not mix well with herbs. Use one treatment or the other, but do not try to use both at once. Professor Edmond Szekely of Hungary, who has achieved many wonderful herbal cures with people whom chemical drug treatments could not cure (I have met many of his cases, restored to excellent health) has discussed in his books, and has described to me personally, the lasting harm frequently caused by chemical drugs and substances of modern sera treatments, which, being unnatural to the human body, have lodged in various organs and defied removal. He declares that it is often more difficult to cure a person of the drugs taken when ill than to cure the illness itself.

In the Materia Medica chapter of this book I mention some of the plants which herbalists of many lands have found beneficial in the treatment of cancer. Cures appear to have been achieved with some of them, especially with red clover flowers, violet leaves and flowers, and vine leaves. However, I consider that although these cancer-treatment herbs may give much relief and retard the growth of cancer, a complete cure is very unlikely, once the human body has degenerated in health sufficiently for such a destructive illness as cancer to grow within it. It is wise to plan a

daily personal campaign against cancer by cultivating a happy and contented mind, breathing unpolluted air, drinking clean water (free from unnatural additions of chemicals), eating natural foods (and in their raw form as much as possible), making use of Nature's abundant herbs, and taking sufficient physical exercise (for without ample exercise total health is not possible).

I consider that herbs are a sacred medicine, promised to man in the Bible. The mystics and the great healers such as that ancient Jewish sect, the Essenes, of which many say that Christ was a member, were herbalists.

I am thankful that right through the ages (discounting the misuses of herbs in black magic) herbs have been kept a "clean" medicine. There has been no association with experiments on laboratory animals — sentient creatures loving life as the normal human being loves life, and made artificially diseased, degraded and then killed, usually without any thought of shame or regret in the deed from the killer.

I like the observation from Dr. Cameron Gruner, M.D., in his book *The Canon of Medicine of Avicenna*:

> Watching the medicinal trees and shrubs and herbs in this way: seeing their properties by their forms and colors and odors, and their changes in character with the changes of the seasons, and alternation of drought and plenty — how great is the wonder of the work of Nature! We note how substances are being elaborated into plants, which we, wanting their help, know how to take at the crucial moment: "Now we must draw the resin, now we must take these flowering tops." But we are not the only watchers. The bees have been waiting, and the birds, and the slugs, the ants, the herbivora — all of these and many others waiting to draw from such supplies that which is applicable to their requirements. Nature herself also waits for these to be collected from her treasury. It is for us ourselves not to pass them by. If we did nothing more than study the Materia Medica of ancient days we should have ample material for thought, and become cognizant of the link between that age and this. The herbs are still cultivated and still used in the East in the manner of the past.

I have learnt much herbal medicine from the wild creatures, noting the herbs that they select for their food or medicine. I have taken note of the desire of all wild animals for the fresh garlics and clovers as well as their dislike of these when plucked and withered and used as plant protectors; the love of birds for chickweed and rose hips, of the tortoise for sorrel and dandelion, of the rabbits and hares for milk thistle and bramble leaves, of the foxes and snakes for the vines, of the bears for the blueberry plants; an endless list.

And the bees! With their exceptional instinct they are seekers of the most medicinal of the herbs. The bees will pass by large flowers rich in easily obtainable, available nectar, and choose instead the tiny flowers of lavender or sage, rosemary or balm. (The bees share my own love for the aromatics, many of which are in the mint family, one that is very rich in medicinal properties.)

I would rather prescribe for animals than humans, because at least in our modern world, animals are usually healthier (except, of course, the caged ones). So many of us are to some extent mentally ill; sadness or rage or fear will retard much of the healing work of the herbs, and that is why I try to insist on what is present-day well nigh unattainable — a tranquil spirit.

When my publishers asked me to write this herbal for humans, in place of my usual veterinary herbal writings, I first thought to refuse. I worried that readers might write to me for individual medical advice and prescriptions. I could never find the time to be involved in such correspondence. In any case I am constantly traveling, most letters sent to me never reach me, and those that do come into my hands are frequently lost; I have not the time in which to answer them. They are put on one side and remain a worry at the back of my mind, while I try to make time to attend to them as well as all my daily tasks. In addition to the usual care of a home, I have my trees, my bees, and usually many animals. There is my daily herbal work, consuming so many hours; the growing, collecting, drying, storing and making up into preparations. I am enthusiastic about the maintenance of good health through natural methods, yet I sometimes think that my habitual

lack of sleep (my days are too short to manage all the pressing work), will eventually destroy me. This I must write, for it is not easy to make people understand what a burden letter writing can be.

If readers will study this herbal, if this form of medicine really appeals to them as it has always appealed to me, they will become herbalists themselves. For this reason, because I cannot offer individual help, I have given much care to making the dosage of the herbs sufficiently clear for readers to follow without difficulty: I hope I have succeeded in this. Following, I have listed a few names of suppliers of herbs and herbal products.

I wish for all readers of this herbal book the health and happiness that herbs have given me and my children. I quote again from the Bible, of Ahab's longing for a herb garden: "And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, 'Give me thy vineyard that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house.'" Every family with a bit of land should plant an herb garden. It will bring them closer to Nature, and that is always a good thing.

And for those who are compelled to live in apartments with no land available at all, there is always the plant pot and the windowbox (if the city air is not entirely fouled with fumes from crowding vehicles or nearby factories). Remember to use charcoal and rubble as foundations for the pots and boxes and to feed the plants with the same care as one's own children: provide the plants with fresh topsoil every week, take precautions not to overwater, wash the foliage free from city grime frequently (though not doing so during sunlight or in cold spells), collect rainwater for the plants, and arrange their placing so that they get sunlight. Suitable plants for such cultivation are basil, chives, marjoram, dwarf rosemary, geraniums (including the scented verbena rose), mints, sorrel, parsley, borage, and the annuals; mustard and cress, coriander, dill, nasturtium, marigold, sweetpeas, larkspur, and many more. Finally, love your plants, your land; only then will all truly flourish. I have loved mine always and that is why they have grown so wonderfully everywhere, for on my travels I have made many gardens and vineyards.

Good growing!

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ISBN 0-9614620-9-4
90000
9 780961 462093

Cover design and illustration by Kimberly Eve.
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Author photograph by Jeff Bernard.

Ash Tree Publishing
Woodstock, NY